JACOBS VOW,

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MANS FELICITY AND DUTY.

In two PARTS.

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at Ormeston.

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THE PREFACE.

THE Scope of the Following Treatiſe may be read in the Tittle. The true Deſign hereof is to direct to *True Felicity*, to ſhew wherein it conſiſts, and what is our Duty, that is, what are the neceſſary Means we ſhould uſe in order to the obtaining it. And as their is little ſaid, but what is ſubſervient to the *Main Deſign*; ſo the Treatiſe being cheifly intended for Common uſe, therefore 'twas Judged fit to ſtudy Plainneſſe and Perſpicuity, rather then fine Language, or quaint Expreſſions; and therefore alſo the Proofs and Evidences of what was neceſſary to be ſaid on this Matter, are drawn from obvious things, which are neither ſo abſtract from common obſervance as to be gainſaid, nor yet ſo abſtruſe and perplext, as to need much Learning,

and more then Ordinary Capacity to understand them. Nothing is delivered but what may be easily understood; and if the least serious Attention be given in reading the same; I am confident they will go away fully convinced of the Truth thereof.

It is true, no new discovery is pretended here, all which is here said of *Mans Felicity and Duty*, are *Old and known Truths*: But however, People have need to be taught them, to be put in mind of them, and to be stirred up to a due Observance of them; and that not only because thy are Necessary and Important things, but also because they are very ready to forget them, and meet with many things Dayly which divert the sense and Practice of what thus evidently belongs to their *Felicity*. Folly and Errour, *Atheisme* and *ungodliness*, take Men off the way of Happinesse, and they are daylie abounding, and many Pamphlets and Discourses spread which help forward their

growth

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JACOBS

JACOB'S VOW
OR
MAN'S FELICITY, AND DUTY.

PART I.

Gen. chap. 28. verſe 20. *And Jacob vowed a vow, ſaying, if GOD will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,*

21. *So that I come again to my fathers houſe in peace; then ſhall the LORD be my GOD.*

22. *And this ſtone which I have ſet for a pillar, ſhall be GOD'S Houſe; and of all that thou ſhalt give me, I ſurely will give the tenth unto Thee.*

CHAPTER I.

The occaſion of this Vow, of Vows in general, their Uſe, what ſhould be the Matter of them, and how neceſſary it is to keep them.

THE Occaſion of *Jacob's* making this Vow, was this, his Parents had ſent him away to *Padan-aram* for fear of

his being corrupted by the Inhabitants of *Canaan*, where they lived, and enticed to take one of their daughters to wife, like as his Brother *Esau* had done: Now as he was on his journey he happened upon a certain place (afterwards called *Bethel*) where he tarried all night, the Sun having ſet upon him before he came thither, and the *Canaanites* not being ſo courteous as to invite him into their houſes, he was neceſſitate to lodge in the open field: but though men denied him entertainment, yet he found what was much better and more comfortable, that he was highly favoured of GOD, for there He appeared to him in a dream, and made him the promiſe of large and great bleſſings; as you may ſee in the 13, 14, 15, Verſes. Upon which, when *Iacob* awakened and conſidered it, *the fear and dread of GOD fell upon him*, and to teſtifie his gratitude and thankfulneſs to GOD, who had thus graciouſly appeared unto him, he ſpake theſe words, and vowed this Vow, by which he bound and oblidged himſelf to ſerve, honour and worſhip GOD, if ſo be that he did theſe things which were promiſed.

This vow was not made raſhly and inconſideratly, but upon ſerious and mature deliberation, nor is the matter thereof light and

and trivial, but weighty and important. It is certainly worthy our conſideration, and hereby we may be inſtructed in very materrial points, *viz.* Wherein our felicity conſiſts, what is the thing we ſhould aim at while in this world, and what is our duty towards GOD: What *Jacob* asked, teacheth the one; and what he promiſed, ſheweth the other, as will appear afterwards. But firſt we will take occaſion to treat of Vows in general, as to their matter, uſe, and obſervance, and thereafter we ſhall handle this *vow of Jacob's* in particular.

Firſt then in general, a *Vow* is an holy and religious promiſe made to GOD, either for ſome mercy and favour, or upon the deſire of ſome bleſſing, as here: And there be many inſtances in Scripture, of Prayers put up to GOD, by way of *Vows*, when our Prayers are accompanied with *Vows*, it doth be-ſpeak a belief of power, and good-will, and particular knowledge on GOD'S part; and earneſtneſs, importunity, and a grateſull Diſpoſition on ours: which are things GOD very much delights in. And this may be the reaſon why they are ordinarily ſo effectuall and ſo ſucceſsfull; For 'tis obſervable that ſuch Prayers prevaile very much with GOD, and do almoſt alwayes

obtain not only a Bleſſing, but even the very ſame thing prayed for. Thus *Jacob* obtained his whole deſire. Thus *Jephthah* however raſh in the matter of his *Vow*, yet out of a Devout Acknowledgement, having vowed to the LORD, got a Victory over the *Ammonites*; So likewiſe *Hannah* received a Child of the LORD, after that She had made a *Vow*. And thus we have read and heard of many, who upon their *Vows* have been delivered from great Straits and Difficulties, recovered of ſore and Dangerous Sickneſſes, and been Bleſſed with ſignal Mercies and Favours. All which teacheth us, that in caſes of great need, or the threatning of Dangers, upon the various and great changes of our Life, in all great and weighty enterpriſes, whoſe ſucceſs doth very much concern us, and in all our moſt ſolemn Approaches to GOD, *I* ſay, that in *theſe*, or the *like caſes*, it may not be amiſs, but good and proper to back and ſtrengthen our Prayers by ſome Pious and Religious *Vow*: For hereby we teſtifie, that we believe GOD able to grant what we ask, and that we our ſelves will retain a grateful ſenſe of His Kindneſs, if ſo be he do it; and beſides, this will awaken our minds to a due and ſerious attention, and add Fervour and Earneſtneſs to

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our Devotions, which endeareth both us and them to GOD, and ſo probably will wreſt a Bleſſing from Him. We ſhould never offer to ask any thing of GOD without reſolving to ſerve him better, or glorifie Him more upon the granting our Deſires and Requeſts; as we would wiſh him to do us good, ſo we ſhould lay obligations upon our ſelves to do him all Acceptable Service; and it is but impudence and mockery to endeavour to get God to befriend us, without thinking to become thereby the more dutiful to him. Wherefore every one of our Prayers and Addreſſes to GOD do contain vows implicity, although we make no expreſs mention of them, for they imply alwayes a promiſe and reſolution to endeavour to pleaſe God, without which they were but meer abominations unto him.

But as it is good ſometimes to make particular Vows, when we pray for any ſpecial bleſſing, and alwayes neceſſary upon all our Addreſſes to GOD, to reſolve in the general to ſerve him and to do His will; ſo it is not good to be raſh and inconſiderat in making of Vows: There is nothing about which we ſhould deliberat more, and therefore it is that young Perſons, and ſuch as are not come to maturity of age, or underſtanding, are diſcharged

charged by all Caſuiſts from the making of vows, becauſe their ignorance and want of knowledge may make them readily erre in this matter, and Vow what is not lawfull or convenient to be vowed. Good Religious and lawful vows doe honour GOD, and are very acceptable to him: But if they be raſh, inconſiderat, and in matters either not lawfull, or not fit, and proper, they do but diſpleaſe him. If we be to *Vow*, then we muſt both uſe all Caution and Prudence in the making of them, and likewiſe ſee carefully to the obſerving of them, otherwiſe we had better not *Vow* at all.

Firſt in the making of *Vows*, we ſhould ſhun all raſhneſs and inconſideration, and ought to take heed, that both the thing we promiſe to GOD, and that which we make the Condition of it be Lawfull, and Agreeable to his will, for if this be wanting, we offer but the Sacrifice of Fooles, and both our Prayers and *Vows* become an abomination unto GOD. What we aske, muſt either be ſomething he hath commanded, or Allowed us to ſeek; It muſt neither thwart his Will, nor be unworthy of Him to grant; and how earneſt ſoever we be, yet our deſires muſt always be attended with a Submiſſion to his Holy Will and Pleaſure, for 'tis then only

only that we are to be confident GOD will hear us, when *we ask according to his Will.* And as we muſt thus uſe Modeſty and Caution in our Prayers, taking heed that what we pray for, be not offenſive to GOD, ſo we ought to ſhew great Prudence and Diſcretion in theſe *Vows* & *Promiſes* we make to *God* upon the granting our Prayers: we muſt ſee that the thing promiſed be both Warrantable in it ſelf, and convenient for us in particular. Many have brought themſelves with *Jephthah* into great ſnares and temptations by their *Vows*, becauſe they did not conſider the matter of them before hand.

This we ſhould chiefly look to, and therefore that we may not make our *Vows* a laſting ſnare to our ſelves, we ſhall do well either to keep within ſome branch of our Duty, as the doing ſuch and ſuch a thing which we are already oblidg'd to, either by our *general Callings* as *Chriſtians*, or by our *particular Calling* as being in ſuch a place or ſtation; the doing of ſome ſuch thing, I ſay, in a more excellent manner, with a greater inclination of the Will, with a more fervent repetition of the Act, with ſome more noble Circumſtance, with a fuller aſſent of the Underſtanding, or ſuch like thing; for by this *Vow of Jacobs*, it is clear that it is neither improper

proper nor impertinent to pitch upon what we are already tied to by *prior obligations*: Or if we have a mind to tie our ſelves to any thing uncommanded, or to which we are not neceſſarily oblidged, as it is proper and requiſite to do in our more *Solemn and Special Vows*; then let us make choiſe of ſomething uſeful and Serious, Grave and Weighty, ſomething that tends to the Glory of GOD, the Benefit of others, or the bettering of our own Souls; at leaſt, let it have an indirect ſubſerviency to ſome of theſe ends, by putting us in greater capacity to advance them, otherwiſe our *Vows* degenerat into *abominable ſuperſtition.* As for example, It is but ſuperſtition, and doth not at all pleaſe GOD, if we tie our ſelves to forbear ſuch a kind of Meat or Drink, unleſs it be becauſe we have found our ſelves provoked to luſt upon the uſe thereof, or that we do fear this effect of it. And it avails very little to *vow* the faſting or not working ſuch or ſuch a day, unleſs we imploy that time we thus redeem from Meat and Labour, in the exerciſes of *Piety and Devotion*, and the improvement of our ſelves in Chriſtian Wiſdom and Vertue. *Bodily exerciſes profiteth nothing*, as ſaith the *Apoſtle*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. Corporal Auſterities are not acceptable to GOD in themſelves, and

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he muſt have mean thoughts of him who thinks it: but only in ſo far as they ſerve and are inſtrumental *to mortifie the fleſh, with the luſts thereof, ſuch as Pride, Vain Glory, Uncleanneſs, Effiminacy, Wrath, Anger,* and the reſt. It is the end and effect of theſe and the like obſervations which make them either acceptable or unacceptable to GOD, if they prove to His Glory, or render us more capable to advance it, if they promote the works of Religion in us, and further us in doing good to others, *GOD* is well pleaſed: But if the fruits of them appear little this way, He doth little regard them.

And hence it doth appear; how little *true Piety* there is in many of theſe *Vows* which are uſually allowed and enjoined in the *Romiſh Church*; For firſt, the matter of ſome of them is ſo mean, and trivial, that it is a Scandal upon Religion to make Religion of them, as the vowing a *Pilgrimage* to *Jeruſalem*, to viſit ſuch a Chappel, or ſuch an Image there, not to eat of the head of any Animal in honour of *John the Baptiſt*, or broiled Fiſh in reſpect to *St Laurence*, or to give ſome wax Candles, Silver Puppets, or the like Childiſh conceits to be kept, or hung up in ſome Church or Chappel; when people are taught and ſuffered to place Devoti-

on in ſuch ſmall things, it cannot but leſſen their eſteem of GOD, and contribute to make them think meanly of him, even as we of *Europe* look with diſdain upon the Kings and Princes of the late diſcovered World, when we read how braſs pins, and glaſs beads, and ſuch like ſilly toys pleaſe them, and gain their favour. Solemn preſents to Kings ought to anſwer their dignity, otherwiſe they are diſhonoured, and ſo God is diſhonoured when the matter of our *Vows* is a meer trifle, or ſome naughty thing, which was the reaſon why under the Law, He diſcharged *to bring the hire of a Whore, or the price of a dog, into the houſe of the Lord thy God for any Vow, Deut.* 23-18. But ſecondly, there be other Vows of the *Romiſh Church* whoſe matter indeed is grave enough, which yet muſt be reckoned among *unlawful Vows*, becauſe of their pernicious conſequence: And theſe are their *Monaſtical Vows, of Celibacy, Implicite and abſolute Obediences, and external poverty*; or rather the abandoning all honeſt and civil imployments uſed to gain a livelyhood in the World. They place Religion ſo much in theſe Vows, that the name of Religion is appropriat to them, and they only among them are called *Religious* who have taken on them ſuch *Vows*: When yet

yet it is certain that these things are not absolutely good in themselves, or pleasing to *GOD*; And seing they who marry, and follow secular Imployments, not onely do not sin, but also thereby observe the *Ordinances of GOD* and his *Providence*; I cannot see a Reason why the title of *Religious* should be denied them, and not thought as much due to them, if so be other things requisite ... curre to make them deserve it. And ... cannot be denied, but that Persons ma... can-*GOD* the one way, as well as the ot... y serve these examples which the Script... ner, for fore us, are drawn not from *Mo*... re sets be-*stered Persons*, but from such as ... *akish* or *Cloi*- and did commonly Traffique ... were Married, Commerce with the World ... and entertain ever are more useful for te...; Which, how-tue and Piety, than the ... aching solid Ver-*Francis*, *Saint Laurence*, ... lives of their *Saint* other Ancient or Mo... *Saint Teresa*, or any produce from their *M*... dern, which they can may take a partic... *lonastries*. But that we severally, That ... ular view of these *Vows* ...ence cannot be ... of *blind and absolute Obedi*- Creature: *G*... lawfully promised to any out any reserv... *OD* ought to be obeyed with- his Will obl... ation, the plain intimation of the Reason ...idgeth to Obedience, though ... thereof be not apparent, because

we owe our ſelves and all we have to him: But as this is due to *GOD*, ſo to none elſe, becauſe none other hath *Abſolute Dominion* over us. Therefore to obey any blindly without conſidering whether it be good or evil, which they enjoyne, is to pay *Divine Honour* to Man. Our ſubjection to others ſhould be alwayes with a ſubordination to *GOD*, and with a reſpect to his Glory; and ſeing no man is ſo infallibly wiſe, but he may miſtake evil for good, nor ſo certainly good, but that he may enjoine evil though he know it, therefore we ought not to do every thing another bids us, until we have examined the ſame, and found it no wiſe offenſive to *GOD*, by being contrary to his Will. And even to make a *Religion* of obeying another in things not evil, but as to their nature indifferent, is to deſtroy our *Chriſtian liberty*, and to caſt our ſelves again into an *uſeleſs bondage*; As to the *vow of external poverty* which proves to be either the renouncing of *ſecular imployments*, and theſe Arts & Trade whereby men ordinarly are neceſſitat to ſeek their living, this can be no acceptable ſervice to God, ſeeing it runs counter to his expreſs ordinance, *in the ſweat of thy brows thou ſhalt eat thy bread*, if men can free themſelves of the neceſſity of eating and drinking, the

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may caſt off all honeſt care and endeavours for theſe ſupplies, otherwiſe they ought not, for St. *Paul* commands, *that if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat*, and ſuch as work not at all, he ſaith, *that they walk diſorderly*, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 10. Sick and Maimed perſons who cannot work for their own Maintenance, ſhould be ſupplied by others Charity, but not theſe who are Able and Healthy, but reſolved to live idly and uſeleſsly to the Commonwealth. And herein the preſent *Monks* of the *Romiſh Church* differs much from thoſe of the *Primitive times*, for the *Ancient Monks* did not eat their bread in idleneſs, but did labour, that they might help others to live, every one ſhould ſtudy to be *poor in Spirit*, *and mortified in his affections to the World*, but theſe may be done in outward poſſeſſions. Finaly, as to the *Vows of Celibacy* and a *total retirement*, they are too important things to be undertaken by any raſhly; and they are ſuch as young Perſons ſhould not be ſuffered at all to engage in: for they cannot well know either the Temper of their Spirit, or the Conſtitution of their Body, how they will agree therewith. If their diſpoſition be contrary, then they involve themſelves into a ſad inconveniency, and almoſt inſuperable difficulties of pleaſing GOD; which might

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be eaſily avoided by taking a courſe more ſutable to their natural diſpoſition. Not to ſpeak of *Celibacy*, every ones humour even will not ſute with that Solitude and retirement, which by the Laws of *Monaſtries* they are oblidged to: who are naturally Studious, thoughtful, and a little Melanchollie, may like it well enough, and alſo fall upon methods for improving it to their grouth in Vertue and Piety. But ſuch as are active and ſprightly weary, of it and count it a burden; And as their nature inclines them to action: ſo when they are any conſiderable time without buſineſs, their fancy runs out upon vain projects and airy contrivances, neither profitable to themſelves, nor others; and which prove an Impediment to Spiritual devotion as much, yea more, then outward innocent actions. He who in his retirements bethinks with himſelf how he would rule the world, if he had place and power, and what he would doe or have done in ſuch and ſuch caſes, ſpends his time more idly, then if he were actually verſant in Wordly affairs; And there be few active Spirits, but have their retirements (if long) Spoiled with ſuch devices and imaginations. The Church of *Rome* ſeems to have foreſeen the inconvenencie

niencies of *Monaſticall Vows*, & to guard againſt them, in that a year of probation is allowed: But it is evident from experience, and many inſtances, that a year is not proof ſufficient, eſpecially when arts and tricks are uſed to delude Novices, and to wheedle them into a belief that things are otherwiſe then what afterwards they find them. If Vows were not impoſed, and that a free *exit* were allowed to ſuch as pleaſed, and found a change convenient; I verily believe *Monaſtries* might be very uſefull both for *Church* and *State*, both for the civil good of the Nation, and the Spiritual good of mens Souls. All men are oblidged to be chaſte, but chaſtity may be preſerved in a married State, as well as in a ſingle life, and every ones conſtitution doth not ſute therewith. It would be good and proper for every man, though never ſo much engaged in worldly affairs, to retire himſelf frequently for the excerciſe of Religion, and the conſidering the ſtate of his ſoul: But hardly any can ſtay their minds altogether upon theſe exerciſes for whole years, much leſs all there lifetime, nor is their any neceſſity thereof, ſeing men may goe about the affairs of the world without croſſing theſe of Religion, and ply the things of this life without prejudice to the other.

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GOD is not pleaſed with our vows, when they have not a tendency to his Glory, our Neighbours good, and our own Spiritual Advantage: and he cannot be but highly diſpleaſed, when by our vows we tie our ſelves to doe ſomething which is unlawfull in it ſelf, or which may be the occaſion of ſome ſin to our ſelves or others; Or to forbear another thing which is good or uſefull, and which is or may become our duty;

What is ſinful or evil, can never honour GOD, but doth diſhonour him, and it doeth bewray a groſs ignorance to ſeek the pleaſing of God by doing contrary to His will: Unlawful *Vows* ſhould not be made, and if made, they ought not to be kept, it is a ſin to make them, but a greater to obſerve them, ſuch *Vows* lay no obligation upon us, except to repentance, and mourning for our raſhneſs and folly. *Herod* was no wayes tyed to cut off the head of *John the Baptiſt* becauſe of his *vow*, for that would never excuſe the murder of that innocent man: neither was the plot againſt *Pauls* life any whit extenuated becauſe the *forty men* had bound themſelves thereto under a curſe. It is a very bad reaſon for one not to come to Church and to refuſe to hear ſuch a Miniſter, becauſe he hath ſworn it. There is no perjury

jury in breaking of theſe *Vows*, the Perjury is in the firſt making of them, becauſe they are contrary to thoſe other general *vows of Baptiſm, &c.* Whereby we are tyed not to do any thing that is evil, but *what ever is good and praiſe worthy.* Wherefore I wonder much however it could have ſlipt from the Author of that excellent Book, entituled, *The whole Duty of Man*, to ſay, *That he who raſhly ſwears to kill another, if he do it, he is guilty of murder, and if he do it not, of perjury, and ſo is under a neceſſity of ſining.* If this be true, it might prove a ſhrewd tentation to the keeping of unlawful *Vows*; For where one of two evils is neceſſary or unavoidable, men are at liberty to chooſe which they will, or what they think leaſt: And there be ſome who have perjury in greater abhorrencie then any other wicked act, & therfore if ſuch have once ſworn a thing though never ſo evil, they will do it, for fear of drawing on them the guilt of *perjury*. This Doctrine therefore may be of very bad conſequence; but however ſuch a neceſſity of ſinning cannot be admitted, unleſſe we make the nature of ſin alterable, and that a ſinful Act may ſometimes ceaſe to be ſinful. One cannot be oblidged by any Law to impoſſibilities, and therefore not to contrary Acts, as to do,

and not to do the ſame thing, at one and the ſame time, for to obſerve both is impoſſible. Wherefore if the doing a thing be ſin, there is onely an Obligation upon us not to do it; and if the not doing thereof be a ſin, then the Obligation is onely to do it; We cannot be oblidged to both, and ſo both cannot be ſins. If it be objected, *that though one and the ſame obligation cannot bind to contrary things, yet we may be bound thereto by different Obligations as in the preſent caſe:* But to this I anſwer, That we are not under any Obligation, but what the Law of GOD layeth upon us, or doth allow; and ſeeing the Law of GOD requireth us alwayes to do good, and forbiddeth to do any evil, therefore a Man can never be ſaid to ſin, by the doing of a good Action, or the forbearance of what is evil, though he hath never ſo preremptorly *Vowed* the one, and ſworn againſt the other: For his Vows and Reſolutions cannot take away his Obligation to obey GOD, and his Law. I have inſiſted the longer on this head, becauſe ſome are ſo tenacious of their raſh and unlawful Oaths, and think it excuſe enough for their continuance in a wicked courſe, that they have ſworn and reſolved it.

Religion certainly will never hallow an wicked

wicked or ungodly act, and it is an abomination to God to offer to worſhip and honour him by any thing ſinful or unlawful: neither out of pretence of *Vows*, muſt we withdraw our ſelves from the duty and obedience we owe to others; for no *Vow* can take away that obligation which is upon Wife's to obey their Husbands, Children their Parents, Servants their Maſters, Subjects their Prince; and which is upon one man to do good, and to ſhew acts of kindneſs and charity to another. Our Saviour taxed the *Scribes and Phariſees* for breaking *the fifth Commandment*, in not relieving their Parents when in want, upon the pretence that their goods were *Corban*, that is, they had Vowed and Devoted all they could ſpare, to the Temple, or other Pious uſes, *Mark* 7. 10, 11. What we Vow and Devot to GOD muſt be our own, abſolutely at our diſpoſal, and no wayes tending to the detriment, or prejudice of others; elſe we cannot expect that it ſhould be acceptable. Thus therefore it is not lawful for a Servant while he is a Servant to devote, and ſet apart whole dayes for privat Prayer, Meditation, or other exerciſes of Religion, unleſs his Maſter concede and yield thereto: He may indeed if he pleaſe allow ſome portion of

his meat to the poor, or ſome part of the time he ſhould eat or ſleep for Spiritual exerciſes, for that is his own; but as for dayes or half dayes or any conſiderable quantity of time, belongs to his Maſter, and it would be a defrauding of him to take the ſame away without his conſent and approbation. That which falls under anothers juriſdiction, muſt not be diſpoſed off without their leave, for that were down right uſurpation and robbery, wherefore GOD *Num:* 30. Gives the *Husband* power to diſſolve the *Wife's Vow*, and the *Father* the *Child's*, And for the ſame reaſon the ſame Liberty muſt be aſſigned to other *Superiours*, whether *Maſters* or *Magiſtrats*. And hence doth appear the unlawfulneſs of that Oath which hath ſo much troubled this Nation; viz. *The Solemn League and Covenant*. For beſides what may be ſaid to the *Matter thereof*, it was an incroachment upon the *Magiſtrats right*, and did engage *privat Perſons* to that which was not within their Sphere, but did properly belong to the *Supreme Magiſtrat*, and the other *Governours of the Church*. When *Inferiours* make Vows to the prejudice of their *Superiours*, and in the *particulars* wherein they are *ſubjected* unto them, the Vows are *ipſo facto* null and void; and the Superiours hath full power and authority

thority to annull and diſpenſe with them.

The ſum of what hath been ſaid, is, that we muſt uſe conſideration in the making of our *Vows*, and muſt look that the condition required be lawful and agreeable to GOD'S Word, and alſo the thing promiſed on our part not ſinful and unlawful, a thing improper and unbecoming us, which diſhonours GOD, prejudges others, and wrongs our own Souls, but that it be a thing lawful and allowable in it ſelf, within our power and at our diſpoſal, and deſigned and uſed by us for GOD'S Glory, our Neighbours advantage, and our own Spirituall good eſpecially. And *finally*, we ought to weigh well our ſtrength and ability, and to have ſome ground to hope, that through GOD'S Grace it will match and maſter all the difficulties, we may encounter in obſerving ſuch a particular as thus we tie our ſelves to. If we obſerve theſe directions and be thus circumſpect in making of *Vows*, we do a thing well pleaſing to GOD, but if we proceed not with this caution and diſcretion, they loſe both of their Worth and Efficacy.

But *Secondly*, as we muſt uſe caution in making of *Vows*, ſo we muſt ſhew care to keep them in every particular, when they are made; Our care of the one muſt be as great

great as the other, otherwiſe we had rather a thouſand times not make any at all. You may ſee how ſtraightly both *Moſes* & *Solomon* enjoyned the punctuall obſerving of ſuch *Vows* as are made to GOD, the one *Deut:* 23. 21. The other *Eccl:* 4: 5: When we break our *Vows*, or ſwerve in any point from them, we draw upon us the guilt both of *Perjury* and *Ingratitude*, the moſt abominable of all ſins, which have been ever moſt odious both to GOD and man, and which ſeldom paſs unpuniſhed, even in this life. All know what a dreadfull Judgment befell *Ananias* and his Wife *Saphira*, it was only becauſe they *lied unto GOD*, *and kept back from him what they had ſworn to give.* Nay, 'tis even obſervable of this ſame *Jacob*, who, for as dear as he was unto GOD, was yet afflicted with ſeveral ſad diſaſters in his Family, becauſe of his delaying the performance of this *Vow:* After his return to *Canaan* he did not preſently (as he promiſed here) *worſhip GOD in this place*, but took up his reſidence elſewhere; and then fell out the Raviſhment of his Daughter, *Dinah*, and the ſlaughter of the *Sichemites* by his two Sons *Simeon* and *Levi*; and that it was his not keeping of his *Vow* which occaſioned GOD thus to puniſh him, may appear from

from this, that GOD immediatly enjoyned him the going up to *Bethel* as a redreſs of theſe troubles, as you may ſee *Gen.* 35. 1. There are many more ſad inſtances almoſt in every Hiſtory, how GOD had plagued thoſe who Vowed to him in their troubles, but forgat him when he had delivered them out of their diſtreſſes; and though God may ſpare his rode a while in this life, yet they ſhall not eſcape altogether unpuniſhed, eſpecially in the life to come.

Wherefore that we may draw to a concluſion of this point, I would ſeriouſly beſeech every one to conſider and call to mind what *Vows* they have at any time made unto GOD, when they were ſeeking any thing of importance from him, or when the fears of Death, or ſome other Danger were upon them, or when they were ſitting at his Table and receiving pledges of his Love; In ſuch and the like caſes and circumſtances, We are all ready enough to make Vows and Promiſes; I know not if we be all as ready to perform and accompliſh them. It's to be feared, that too many are like bad Debitors, who either altother refuſe the payment of their debt, or elſe ſhift it off from day to day, and thereby do declare their folly and diſingenuity, and mon-

monſtruous ingratitude. If GOD hath been ſo gracious as to hear us, ſhould not we alſo be faithful in keeping the Promiſes we made to Him; following *Davids* practice, *Pſalm* 66. 13. where he ſaith, *I will go into thy houſe with burnt offerings, I will pay Thee my Vows which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath ſpoken when I was in trouble*; And again, *Pſalm* 116. 12. having asked himſelf, *What ſhall I render unto the* LORD, *for all His benefits towards me?* His anſwer & reſolution was, *I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the* LORD, *I will pay my Vows unto the* LORD, *in the preſence of all His People.* See and conſider then I pray you, what have been your particular *Vows* and *Promiſes* at any time, and labour now to keep them faithfully; Did you promiſe to be more Holy? to have a greater Love and Zeal for GOD? Did you *Vow* to be more ſtudious to advance his Glory? to be more Juſt and Honeſt in your Dealings, more kind to your Neighbours, and more Charitable to the Poor? Did you at any time paſs your word that you would Pray oftner, and more fervently in privat by your ſelves, and take a care that the Worſhip of GOD be obſerved in your Family? That you would forbear Swearing and Drinking, looſe and prophane com-

company? did you promiſe greater Sobriety & temperance? Did you engage to bridle your paſſion? To be watchfull againſt Anger and Wrath, and to ſtudy Calmneſs and Peace? Did you engage to be more contented with your Allowances, and more thankfull for them? Did you vow to keep the Church better? To be a more Devout and attentive Hearer of GOD'S Word, and of the Inſtructions of his Servants? Have ye devoted any particular time for privat retirements and Converſe with GOD, or any particular Moity of your Eſtates for Pious uſes; Whether theſe, or whatever elſe have been the matter of your *Vows*, ſee that ye both Remember them, and alſo give diligence to obſerve them, neither mince thy *Vows*, nor defer the paying of them. Let it not be ſaid that thou art liberall in thy promiſes, but ſparing in thy performances: Like him, who when he was in Hazard of periſhing at *Sea*, promiſed a rich offering, but when he came to land, put it off with a penny matter. Keep thy Word to GOD, and doe it chearfully without grudging; Let not our preſent Eaſe and Proſperity blot out the Senſe and Memory of his paſt Loving Kindneſs, neither let us account any thing too good for

God, or too much to be given him? We can give him nothing but what is his own, for all that we have, we received from him, and we can do nothing to him, but what is our bounden duty. And withall let us Remember, that we may have yet need of his Kindnes. We may yet fall into straits and trouble, be seized with Sickness and in fear of Death, and then how much will it concern us to have him our friend? but how, and with what confidence, can we cry unto him? if we now deal deceitfully with God, and break the word which we have uttered. That therefore we may avoid the Divine Vengeance and Displeasure, and also *have GOD to be our refuge, and a present help in the time of trouble, let us Vow and pay our Vows unto the LORD*, and keep every thing which hath gone out of our lips.

Thus we have spoken of *Vows* in Generall, have shewed the Nature of them, what Obligation there is on us to make them, what Caution should be used in the making of them, and what care to keep them when they are made.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Jacobs Requeſts, Mens Wiſdom diſcernable by the matter of their Deſires; GOD denyes no Requeſts, but what are unreaſonable and improper; all that is neceſſary to compleat ones Happineſs is contained in the particulars which Jacob here askes of the firſt, viz. the Divine Preſence, what it is, and how excellent a Bleſſing, with an Exhortation to ſeek after it.

HAving taken occaſion in the former Chapter upon *Jacobs Vowing*, to ſpeak of *Vows in general*; we come next to treat of this *Vow in particular*, in which we have to conſider theſe two things, viz. What he promiſed unto GOD, and what he craves of him as the condition of the Performance of that Promiſe. This laſt ſtands firſt in the *Text*, and therefore we ſhall handle it firſt.

Now *Jacob* craves here three things of GOD, firſt, that *GOD would be with him*, that is his Preſence; Secondly, that *he would keep him in his way*, which is his Protection; Thirdly, that he would *afford him his neceſſary maintenance* of *Food and Raiment*; theſe are his deſires; And in the *fourth place*,

you have the end for which he asks theſe things, and it is that he may be brought *back to his Fathers houſe in peace.*

Jacob may ſeem at firſt to ask no great matter, his requeſts look not very big; and 'tis true they are modeſt and reaſonable: But yet if they be duely conſidered and ſeriouſly canvaſs'd, they will be found to comprehend all that is neceſſary to compleat ones Happineſs. There is nothing that diſcovers men more than their Requeſts and Petitions, for they do certainly ſpeak out the *ſentiments of their mind*, and what it is their Hearts ſet moſt value upon. It was once wittily ſaid to a young man, *ſpeak that I may ſee thee*, thereby ſignifying, that we know Men better by their Words than by their Faces: But this eſpecially holds true, when their Words expreſs their Deſires. A Fool may be known by his deſires, and a Wiſe man by his. For by theſe we may perceive eaſily what Knowledge and Underſtanding one hath, and what Inclinations and Diſpoſitions, whether they have taken up right Meaſures of things, and do judge according to their true Nature, or only according to their outward appearance. Fools look only to the outward appearance, and if a thing gliſter, or make any big or ſplendid

ſplendid ſhew, they covet it, whatever it be in it ſelf; But Wiſe men peirce through into the *inward nature* of things, & ſeek only what is Solide and Subſtantial, Good and Uſeful, like as the *Patrjarch* did here. For in that he ſought theſe and no other things from GOD, it ſhews him to have been Wiſe and Underſtanding, that he had e're this time weighed and pondered all things as they relate to Man, and found out what was Good, Proper and neceſſary for him.

And truely, would we reſtrain our Deſires to theſe things *Jacob* here mentions, if we would make theſe all we aime at in reference to this Life, we ſhould both Act more wiſely than ordinarly we do, and ſhould alſo find it much better with us; If we would put up ſuch Requeſts as theſe unto GOD, he would certainly grant them, and in granting them we ſhould find all that Comfort and Good which our Hearts can wiſh. It is not for want of Will or Power in GOD that our Petitions and Requeſts are not granted, for he is both *able and willing to do us good beyond the largeſt of our deſires*: But it is becauſe they deſerve not to be granted, they are neither reaſonable in themſelves, nor put up for Good ends and Purpoſes, and ſo do carrie a reaſon of their

their refusal in their very bosome. A Parent denies his Child what he cryes for, not for want of Love, but out of the Tender regard he hath to him, because he knows it would hurt him; and a Physitian doth not allow his Patient the Meat and Drink which he asks, not because he doth not desire his Health and Recovery: But because he perceives his Appetite vitiat, and disordered; and knows that the thing required would hinder his Health, and increase his Distemper. It is even so with GOD, the Reason why he heareth not our Prayers, is because they are not Reasonable, and that we do not wisely consider what we speak. *Ye ask, and receive not, (saith St. James) Because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts,* Iam. 4. 3. GOD cannot hear these Prayers which are prompted by Lust, Sensuality, Pride, Ambition, Vain-glory, covetousness, and the other disorders of our Corrupt Nature, which should rather be starved and stifled, than fostered and encouraged; and we may be sure GOD will never furnish us with Weapons to rebel against himself. But as GOD designes the good and Happiness of his Creatures, so if we intend no more than that, he will not deny us; if we seek really that which is good for us, and which may

may help forward the happineſs we were Created for, He will freely beſtow it: for he only rejects and upbraids theſe Prayers which reſpect not the Right end, neither obſerve the right means or meaſures, otherwiſe *he gives to all men liberally and willingly.* The advice therefore of the *Poet* is good,

Quod juſtum eſt petito, vel quod videatur honeſtum:
Nam ſtultum eſt petere id, quod poſſit jure negari.

Engliſhed thus,

Who would not have his Suite in vain,
on what is Honeſt ſet his eye;
He is a Fool, who thinks t'obtain,
what Reaſon juſtly may deny.

What the Heathen Satyriſt alſo writes on this head, is not unworthy of a *Chriſtian*, and deſerves to be conſidered,

Nil ergo optabunt homines? ſi conſilium vis,
Permittes ipſis expendere Numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebuſq; ſit utile noſtris. Juvena. ſat. X.
Nam pro jucundis aptiſſima quæq; dabunt Dii.
Carior eſt illis homo, quam ſibi. Nos animorum
Impulſu, & cæca, magnaque cupidine ducti,
Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris: at illis
Notum, qui pueri, qualiſq; futura ſit uxor.

Engliſh-

Engliſhed thus,

Shall man then pray for nothing? if I may
Adviſe thee, let the Gods thy wiſhes weigh,
Unto their Providence thy Will ſubmit,
And for what's ſweet, they'le give thee what is fit.
And that which thy condition moſt behoves,
The Gods love man more then himſelf he loves. *Stapl.*
Tranſported with a blind-ſelf-love we crave,
That all of us may Wives and Childen have,
But to the Omniſcient *Deity*, alone,
What Wives, what Children we ſhall have, is known.

Now there is no more neceſſary to compleat our Happineſs then what *Jacob* craves here, all things elſe are ſuperfluous, this alone is ſufficient to afford us all the comfort & ſatisfaction we would be at, in theſe things lye that good which men ſo much deſires, but know not how to find, as we may diſcern by taking a particular view of them.

And firſt of the *Divine Preſence*, which the *Patriarch* here requires to accompany him. A Staff and a Companion are very neceſſary in a Journey; It is a comfortleſs thing to travel vvithout ſomething to aid & ſupport us, and vvithout a friend vvith vvhom vve may adviſe and conſult, and in vvhoſe ſociety

Society and Fellowſhip, we may Refreſh and Solace our ſelves upon all Occaſions. This *Jacob* perceived, and therefore he deſired not to Travel alone, but intreated that GOD might accompany him. All company is not good, better want altogether than have ſome; And therefore Wiſe men uſe to make choice, and to look well whom they admit into Familiarity or an intimat Friendſhip; The better our Companions be, their company is ſtill the more profitable, and we have the greater comfort in it; And if we would know where, and how to make choice of a True, Good, and Uſeful Friend, alwayes to go along with us, we may receive Direction from *Jacob* here; For he indeed hath pitched upon him. And this doth ſufficiently Evince, what Wiſdom and Knowledge this man had even at this time, when in the firſt place, and before all things he prayed that *God might be with him.*

But here ſome may ask and ſay, what needed *Jacob* ask the *Divine Preſence* as a Singular and Peculiar Favour? Seeing that GOD *is every where preſent, even with all Creatures.* Did he think GOD, a local God, tied or confined to any place, or who being in one place, cannot be in another? No certain

rainly, this Holy Man had no ſuch mean and low thoughts of GOD; He was better inſtructed than to be ſo Ignorant of his Infinitneſs and Immenſity, he underſtood well enough *that the Heaven of Heavens could not containe Him, and that His Preſence, Power and Glory filled both Heaven, and Earth*, he was a better *Philoſopher* than not to know that His Preſence and the actual Concurrence of His Power was requiſit to the Preſervation of all and every one of his Creatures, and that nothing could ſubſiſt without him. But it was not this generall preſence, which every Creature enjoyes that *Jacob* begged, it was a more ſpeciall preſence whereby he might ſhew that he was intereſſed in Him, and concerned for him, a preſence of Special Favour, Love, and Kindneſs, to be preſent, as to let it appear that he cared for him and ſtudied his good: This is the Preſence of GOD which *Jacob* requires and the Reaſon why he ſo earneſtly asks it, and doth thus prefer it in the firſt place, is no doubt becauſe he had learn'd from his *Fathers Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, that it was this that made them ſo Thrive and Proſper in the World: The Reaſon why they were ſo Singularly Bleſſed above others, was, becauſe GOD was with them. Thus alſo the good

good luck which *Joseph* had, is ascribed to the Lords being with him, *Gen.* 39. 3. and this likewise is made the cause of *Davids* Wisdom, Courage and Success, as you may see 1 *Sam.* 18. 14, 28. 2 *Sam.* 5. 10. and it was a thing very useful with the *Ancients*, when they would express how well and happy a man was, to say, that *GOD was with him.*

And indeed how can it be but well with that Person, *whom GOD is with*, what can he want who hath him to be his Friend; He who hath the *Divine Presence* accompanying him whithersoever he goeth is Richer, and Happier, than if he had all the treasures of the world carried about with him: For *God is the Author and Fountain of all Good, from Him every Good, and perfect Gift doth come*, he can easily command any desirable thing where, when, and to whom He pleases: So that he who enjoys GOD hath enough, and needs not fear or care for the want of any thing, for *GOD* will be to him in stead of all things. And in having Him he may say truly as that *Philosopher* said, *Omnia mea mecum porto*, that is, *I carrie about with me all things proper*, all things necessary or requisit, either for my Support or Comfort, for *GOD* is all that. It was a vain and

proud boaſt of *Ceſars* to the *Mariner*, who was wafting him over the *Adriatick* to *Italy*, when he perceived him ſeized with Fear and ready to turn back, *Perge audacter, ne timeas, Cæſarem vehis, Cæſariſque fortunam*, be not afraid you carrie with you *Ceſar* and his Fortune: But truly every one that hath *GOD* with them, may with reaſon confidently ſay to himſelf, *be not afraid, ſad or dejected, Deum habes ejuſque favorem, you have GOD & his favour*; and having that, what cauſe can there be of Fear or Dejection? For He is Wiſdom, Power, all Goodneſs, and All-ſufficiencie it ſelf, and therefore He is a True Aid, and Support, and a ſure Rock to build on, which will never fail. *Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in Him*, Pſal. 2. 12. *Though I walk*, ſaith David, *through the valley & ſhaddow of death, yet will I fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy Rod and thy Staff they comfort me.* Pſal. 23. 4. The very hopes of this ſpecial Preſence and Favour of *GOD*, did mightily bear up the *Pſalmiſt's* Spirit, when he was like to be overwhelmed with trouble, he chides and is in a chaff with himſelf, for being any wayes troubled, having this hope, *Why art thou caſt down*, ſaith he, *O my Soul, and why art thou diſquieted in me? Hope thou in GOD, for I ſhall yet praiſe Him, who is the health*

health of my countenance and my GOD, which he repeats twice, *Pſal.* 42. and once, *Pſal.* 43.

Many excellent Bleſſings and advantages follow him *whom GOD is with.* Firſt, he is ſure of Counſel and Direction which is a very neceſſary and deſireable thing: The life of man while in this World is for the moſt part Dark, Intricate and full of Difficulties, 'tis like a *Labyrinth* full of perplexities, we cannot well diſcern the outgate; We know not what certain courſe to Steer for our profit and advantage: As the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſaith, *the way of man is not in himſelf, it is not in him that walketh to direct his ſteps*, *Jerem.* 10. 23. It is not ſafe to follow our own Devices, things ordinarly ſucceed worſe when we do ſo; the wittieſt Men have ſometimes befooled themſelves by leaning too much to their own Wit. No Mans Wit and Judgement can be ſufficient of it ſelf to guide him, and oft-times we are no much better of others, for they are ſhort ſighted too as well as our ſelves, and may miſtake things as well as we: we can never therefore be ſure that we are right, but when we follow the Counſel and Direction of GOD, when we are guided by him who cannot err, becauſe *his underſtanding is infinit.* But if he be with us, his Counſel will be with

us

us too, if he hath ſet his Heart upon, and choſen us for his Friend, he will alſo guide and inſtruct us, and ſhew us the way wherein we ſhould walk; *What man is he*, ſaith *David, that feareth the LORD? him ſhall he teach in the way he ſhall chooſe*, *Pſal.* 25. 12.

But here ſome may ask, How doth GOD teach us? And what way are we to expect Direction from Him? Muſt we look for Revelations, Dreams, and Viſions? Indeed this was not unuſual under the *Old Teſtament*, GOD did then very ordinarly this way manifeſt himſelf to the Patriarchs, and others his Eminent Servants; but now it pleaſes Him to forbear it, at leaſt, that ſo common uſe thereof; and we are neither to ask nor to look for Advice and Counſel this extraordinary way. But however, if we wait on GOD, we may be confident of Direction from him, which he will communicat to us two manner of wayes: Firſt, by the inward ſuggeſtions of his Spirit, he will not only enlighten our minds, and clear our underſtandings with wiſdom & knowledge, ſo that in the general we ſhall be able to know what is good and right; but he will alſo help us to diſcern what is fit and proper in that particular caſe & circumſtance wherein we ſtand, & will ſecretly incline and draw us whither his Wiſdom

Wiſdom ſees it fit for his Glory, & our comfort. This is no idle Fancy, or Deluſion, it is no piece of *Fanaticiſm*, or a Dream of *Enthuſiaſtical perſons*, but a certain real Truth, which all Good and Holy Perſons have felt from their experience; Though theſe words of the Prophet, *Iſa.* 30. 21. *Thine ears ſhall hear a word behind thee, ſaying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left*; are not altogether to be reſtricted to an *inward inſpiration*, but alſo to be underſtood that *external Voice in the Word, and by the Miniſtry of His Servants*: Yet *Solomon* ſeems to hold out this, when he ſaith, *in all thy wayes acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths*, *Prov.* 3. 6. This alſo muſt be the meaning of *Elihu*, in theſe words, *There is a Spirit in Man, and the Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding*, *Job* 32. 8. This Voice is inward, and therefore not audible, or perceptible by our outward Senſes, but however it may prove effectual enough for to move and ſway us: "And though as "one ſays, this ſecret Direction of *Almighty GOD* is principally ſeen in matters relating to the good of the Soul, yet it may be alſo found in the great and Momentous Concerns of this life

Halls Cont. of the fear of GOD.

"life, which a good Man that fears GOD, "and begs his Direction, ſhall very often, if "not at all times find." *I* hope none will be ſo injurious as to think, I intend to countenance or authoriſe thoſe who father horrid impieties and moſt impertinent extravagancies upon GOD, pretending they are carried thereto by a ſecret impulſe of the Spirit. I know and would have every one to aſſure himſelf that *God* is never the author of what is evil, fooliſh or ridiculous, whatever comes from him is worthy of him, that is to ſay, ſutable to *infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs*; neither doth GOD ſhew himſelf thus to any mean trivial things, but in matters of ſerious Importance. But becauſe ſome have been ſo far out of purpoſe, as to alledge *Inſpiration* for every thing, and to lay ſuch things upon GOD, as are inconſiſtent with the *true notions of a Diety*, therefore to deny all ſuch Commerce betwixt GOD and Men, or that he ever doth ſuggeſt Counſel or Advice to any in any matter, is I think very unreaſonable; both theſe are Extrems, which I deſire to ſhun. I doubt not but good & vertuous Perſons, who commit themſelves intirely to the *Divine Conduct* may, and do find themſelves ſometimes extraordinarly directed in Weighty and Important Caſes, eſpecially when

when their own Wit and Reaſon is at a ſtand. To this purpoſe I was told a remarkable Paſſage, when *Dundee* was ſtormed and taken by the *Engliſh*, in our late Revolutions; *This Town being fancied fooliſhly to be a place of ſtrength, and able to hold out, therefore many reſorted thither, and among the reſt, a certain Citizen of* Edinburgh, *with his Wife and Apprentiſe, who finding themſelves ſadly diſappointed upon the entry of the Enemy, and ſacking of the Town, were in great anguiſh of Spirit, and concluded themſelves loſt, and therefore they recommended their Souls to GOD'S Mercy; but the Woman was extraordinarly moved to go down to the ſtreet, and no entreaties of her Husband could diſſwade her; when down, the firſt ſhe eſpied was one of a goodly countenance, whom ſhe laid hold on, deſiring he might go with her; When he comes to the houſe ſhe falls on her knees, and ſaid, Sir, you ſhall have all my goods, only ſave my Husband's life, which he granted, telling her withall, that Providence had directed her to him, for the laſt Fight he was at, he received a courteſie from a* Scots Man, *which made him ſwear, to ſave the firſt that ſought quarters in this. This had not well paſſed betwixt them, when the enraged Souldiers thronged in upon them, and if it had not been for him, they had undoubtedly periſhed.* This was a ſingular *Providence*, and I had it from the good

Woman her ſelf, who ſtills remembers it a an inſtance of GOD'S kindneſs, and which among other things ſhe makes the Matter of her *Devout*, and thankfull Acknowledgement. A ſecond way whereby GOD directeth us, is *External*, viz: By the Wiſe and Happy Occurrences of *his Providence*, ordering the Circumſtances of things ſo happily together, and making ſeveral things to fall out ſo well at one time, a that we are neceſſarily and in a manner unawares engaged into that courſe he Deſigne we ſhould take, which will always be for our well, if we *commit our ſelves unto him*. Thus he made *Abrahams* Servant to light very happily upon the houſe of his *Maſter Brethren*, and the Woman whom he ſhould chooſe for his Maſter's *Son's* Wife; and thus alſo he directed *Jacob* to *Laban*, and *Ruth* to *Boaz*. *The ſteps of a good man*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *are ordered by the LORD*, *Pſal:* 37: 23. He by his *ſecret* Providence doth ſo diſpoſe of him, and engageth him to ſuch a conduct in his affairs, that his Good, Peace and Advantage, Credit and Comfort is carried on better than he deſired, or could have expected, and by wayes and means which he could never foreſee. Theſe methods of *Divine Providence*, ſometimes look not Fair and

Favourable

Favourable, at the beginning they may look as if he frowned and threatned us: But the iſſue of them even then proves moſt happy, as we ſee in *Joſeph's* caſe. Who ſo is wiſe as to obſerve the tract of his own life, and GOD'S dealings with himſelf & others, ſhall come ſufficiently to underſtand both this *Wiſdom and Loving Kindneſſe of the* LORD.

But ſecondly, GOD'S Preſence is not deſirable for Counſel and Direction only, but upon many other accounts: nay there is no Reaſon which may move us to deſire any thing whatſoever, but the ſame ſhould excite us to this: For either he can give the good, which we deſire, or he can ſupplie the want thereof; He hath every thing at His diſpoſal, and whatever Vertue or Property any Creature hath is from Him; Neither can they produce even their moſt Natural effects without him, but when he pleaſes he can work his will without them. It is not Bread alone which preſerveth our Life, but his Bleſſing upon it, and he can eaſily when he ſees it fit, maintain our Natural Life, and vigour without all Food, as he did to *Moſes*, and *Elijah*, and our *Saviour*. It is not Medicine nor Phyſick which recovers our Health, but his Bleſſing in our uſe

of them, and even when theſe Means are wanting, yet his Hand is not ſhortned; but that he can make Whole and reſtore Health without them. It is not our Labour and Induſtry or any Endeavours we can uſe, which will make us compaſſe the ends we would be at, unleſs He act and concur with us; For if he give not the Bleſſing, if he ſpeak not the Word, all that we can do will be in vain. *It is in vain for you*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *to riſe up early, to ſit up late, to eat the bread of ſorrows, for it is he who giveth his Beloved ſleep. Pſal.* 127. 2. And the Prophet *Haggai* tells us plainly, *that men may ſow much, and yet bring in but little, they may eat, and not have enough, drink, and not be filled, they may be cloathed, and yet not warm, and earn wages but put it into a bag with holes, Hag.* 1 6. So that the Favourable *Preſence of GOD* is deſireable, both to ſupply what we want, and to make theſe things which we have uſeful and comfortable: He that hath GOD with him, hath not only a *Wiſe Friend*, but a powerful one, *who can do whatſoever he pleaſeth in Heaven or in Earth*, who can oblidge and command Angels and all Creatures to Serve and Miniſter unto him whom he loveth: Thus he cauſed the Ravens to feed the Prophet *Elijah*; Theſe Foules by Nature are more ready

ready to ſteal and take away than to give, and yet at the Command of GOD, they *brought him* Bread *and Fleſh in the morning, and Bread and Fleſh in the evening*, 1 *King.* 17. 6. He made the jaw bone of an Aſs to afford drink unto *Sampſon* when he was ready to to faint for thirſt He cauſed the Heavens to rain down Bread to his People in the Wilderneſs, and gave them Quails in great abundance, ſo that even then they were fed to the full: And in a word, as there is nothing impoſſible unto GOD, as by his Power he can do all things whatſoever he pleaſeth, ſo he will never fail to work Mightily and Wonderfully for thoſe whom he loveth, when his Glory or their Good requires it, he will withhold nothing from them which their neceſſity or comfort calls for, and will make all things, even what ſeems moſt rough, ſevere, and adverſe, *to work together for their good*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom* 8.28. and as may be eaſily made appear from many inſtances drawn from Scripture, and alſo other Hiſtory.

But thirdly, though the *Divine preſence* ſhould not thus ſignally manifeſt it ſelf in procuring *External Succeſſes and Advantages*, yet it rendereth one happy, in that Peace and Tranquillity, Joy and Gladneſs doth

pass by this & yet real Cause

ever

ever flow from it, and the ſenſe thereof. Inward Peace and Contentment and Gladneſs of Heart every Man covets, but few rightly underſtand where or how it is to be had: It doth not flow from an abundance of *Temporal things* & an Affluence of *Worldly enjoyments*; one may have as much of theſe as heart can wiſh, and yet be without inward peace and Satisfaction, and however it is but a weak and brittle peace, a very ſlender comfort which a Man can ſuck from theſe outward and *Periſhing enjoyments*: when theſe things are not conſidered as tokens and expreſſions of the *Divine Favour*, they can yield no more but *vanity and vexation of Spirit*, as *Solomon* proves, by his manifold experiences. True Peace and Joy can be built upon no other foundation then GOD Himſelf, it reſults only from the enjoyment of him, and a Senſe and Aſſurance of his Favour and Love, if he be with us, he both can and will give us a Peace, which the whole World cannot give, and which none can take from us. *Thou will keep him*, ſaith the Prophet, *in perfect Peace whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee*, *Iſa.* 26. 3. when others were earneſtly craving and gaping for this, and the other Worldly delight, ſaying, *who will ſhew us any good*: *David* prayes

prayes ſeriouſly, *LORD lift up the light of thy Countenance upon us.* And he adds the reaſon why he deſired this ſo much above all other things, becauſe ſaith he. *Thou haſt put Gladneſs in my heart, more then in the time that their Corn and Wine encreaſed, Pſal. 4. 6, 7.* That is, he had more Joy from GOD'S Preſence & Favour, then men uſe to have in the time of Harveſt when all things moſt abound with them. This Peace and Comfort, which GOD giveth, is not neceſſarily annexed to outward Plenty and Proſperity, nor alwayes attended with it: There may be outwardly nothing but Want and Poverty, Sickneſs and Diſtreſs, Trouble and Affliction, and yet even in this caſe GOD may inwardly afford *a joy unſpeakable*, and a *peace which paſſeth all underſtanding.* Wherefore Chriſt tells his Diſciples, that *in the World they ſhould have trouble, but in me ye ſhall have peace*, as if he had ſaid, be not afraid, for the trouble you meet with in the World, ſhall not bereave you of that peace I promiſe; and therefore alſo *Solomon* ſaith *Prov. 14. 14. That a good man ſhall be ſatisfied from himſelf*, that is his ſatisfaction & comfort depends not *on external enjoyments*, or things without him, but he can draw it from within, through the intimat preſence of GOD which doth alwaies attend him. And thus

thus you ſee how deſireable a thing the *Preſence of* GOD is, & how happy he muſt needs be *whom GOD is with.*

Wherefore let all of us be ſo wiſe as to imitat *Jacob*, to ſeek this in the firſt place, and to prefer it before all things; Let us Pray to GOD that he may be with us, and even covenant with him, as *Jacob* doth here for this end, that in him, and by him, we may be ſupported. Doth not our experience tell every one of us that we are not able to ſuſtaine our ſelves? and that we muſt be propt and upholden, or elſe we cannot chooſe but droup and fall. Man is like unto the Hop or Ivie, and ſuch other weak plants, which cannot ſtand of themſelves, nor bear their own weight, but muſt have ſomething to lean to: How miſerable would we be if we were left to our ſelves, and deſtitute of all *external help*? how inſignificant would one be if he had no other ſupplies, but what he could furniſh from, and by himſelf? We have certainly no ſufficiency or ſubſiſtence of our ſelves, and therefore we ought to cleave unto him, who only can ſtay and ſupport us: If we lay the ſtreſs and comfort of our Souls upon any other thing beſides GOD, it will be but like the Hop or Ivie's claſping about a Thiſtle, or Nittle, for want

ready to ſteal and take away then to give, and yet at the Command of GOD, they *brought him Bread and Fleſh in the morning, and Bread and Fleſh in the evening*, 1 *King.* 17. 6. He made the jaw bone of an Aſs to afford drink unto *Sampſon* when he was ready to to faint for thirſt. He cauſed the Heavens to rain down Bread to his People in the Wilderneſs, and gave them Quails in great abundance, ſo that even then they were fed to the full: And in a word, as there is nothing impoſſible unto GOD, as by his Power he can do all things whatſoever he pleaſeth, ſo he will never fail to work Mightily and Wonderfully for thoſe whom he loveth, when his Glory or their Good requires it, he will withhold nothing from them which their neceſſity or comfort calls for, and will make all things, even what ſeems moſt rough, ſevere, and adverſe, *to work together for their good*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom* 8. 28. and as may be eaſily made appear from many inſtances drawn from Scripture, and alſo other Hiſtory.

Though neither *privat Perſons* nor *publick States*, are now to expect to be maintained & ſupported by Miracles and *extraordinary manifeſtations* of the *Divine Power*, ſo much and ſo frequently as the *Children of Iſrael* were of old,

yet *particular Providences* must not be denyed; We must not think that GOD hath now abstracted himself from the Government of the World, and from taking care of such as love and fear Him, *His eyes are still upon the Children of Men*; He interesseth himself in their Affairs, and hath the chief hand in the disposal thereof, *His eyes are still upon the Righteous, and his ears are open to their cry*; now as much as formerly, he still shews a special care of his own, and when *ordinary means* and *methods* fail, and prove ineffectual for compassing their good; He interposeth himself by Wayes and Means extraordinary, as might be made evident from the lives of some who have been eminently Holy and Pious. I doubt not but who will be at the pains to make Collections, may find many Instances almost parallel to those we read of in *Sacred Writ*; I shall mention some which may perhaps help to the remembrance of others, and that deserves the first place, which the Reverend Archbishop *Spotswood* tells us of Mr. *John Craig*; (*Spots: Hist. lib.* 6. *p.* 462.) This eminent Person having fallen upon *Calvins Institutions* at *Bononia*, by which Means, he came not only to know the Doctrine of the *Protestants*, but also to be perswaded of the truth thereof, which being discovered, he was thereupon delated, and sent to *Rome*, where he was tryed by the *Court of Inquisition*, who condemned him to be burnt as an *Heretick*. But it pleased GOD, before the day of his Execution, to remove *Pope Paul* the 4th, whose death occasioned an uproar in the City, and several disorders amongst the rest, the Prison doors were broken open, which afforded to Mr. *Craig* the opportunity of an escape; And as he fled he met with two remarkable Instances of *Providence*. For first, *Passing through the Suburbs of* Rome, *a company of* Banditi *met him, one of whom accosted him, and asked if he knew him, which Mr.* Craig *denying, the other remembred him of a Sourtesie he formerly received at* Bononia, *and for which he not only bestowed on Mr.* Craig *some Money, but also conveyed him safe forth of the City, and directed him in the right way to* Bononia, *whither he intended. But not finding that good Reception there he expected; he resolved up-*

to Millan, without either knowledge of the way, or the necessary means of all support for a Traveller; and while he lay pensive at the side of a little Brook, he received a second instance of GOD's special Favour and Providence, for a Dog came to him with a purse of Money in her mouth. This (as the Reverend Historian sayes) may seem somewhat incredible; yet I cannot see how the truth thereof should be rejected, seing Mr. *Craig* himself did frequently relate the story; for both the holiness of his life, frees him from all suspition of Forgery, and any design of Imposing upon Men; and also the eminent Imployments he was honoured with, both before and after his Conversion to the *Protestant Religion*, shews him to have been far from the simplicity of being cheated and deluded himself.

It is also reported of D. *Barnaby Potter*, That after he had passed the ordinary time of his Studies in the University of *Oxford*, he was like to have missed his Degrees, for want of Money to defray the Charges thereof, upon which he retired to his Chamber, and vented his grief in Prayers and Tears before GOD, and while he was at Prayer, *One came knocking at the door, and required him to come and speak with the Vice-Chancelour, who bestowed on him as much Money as the present necessity called for.* To these I shall subjoyne two or three more of latter date, which I have from very good hands. And firstly it is reported of a worthy Divine of our Neighbour Nation, who was reduced in times of the late Troubles to great Straits; And one time especially, *he and his Family had been a day or two without victuals; and being much moved with their looks and speeches, by a secret suggestion of the Spirit, he commanded the Servant Maid, to go with her basket to the Market; (albeit he had no money to give with her.) When she came there, passing up and down without offering to buy any thing, she was espyed by some who were drinking nigh by. They invited her in, and began to make merry with her; but she not being in the disposition for it; told them sadly, "That though they were at their cups, yet such a good Man her Master and his*

Family were ſtarving". Upon which they preſently collected a ſum of Money, and gave it her, with which ſhe bought Proviſions and took home with her. A *Second Inſtance* ſhal be of a Widow-Gentle-Woman in this ſame Countrey, who was left with ſeveral ſmall Children but little or nothing to maintain them with; and it being in theſe troubleſome Times wherein there was little occaſion for ſhewing Induſtry, or uſing honeſt Shifts, this made her condition the more hard: *One day, to divert her from the cries of her Children, ſhe reſolved to make a viſit to ſome perſon living at ſome diſtance, and as ſhe was paſſing thither, GOD ſent a rain, which occaſioned her to ſtep into a Milne, for fear of ſpoiling a new Plaid which ſhe carried about her, where ſhe rencountred with an Aquaintance who was making meall for the ſervice of the Publick, and he underſtanding her condition, cauſed take home with her two loads of meal for the uſe of her ſelf and family.* I ſhall mention but one Inſtance more, which fell out much about the ſame time, and it was of another Widow Gentlewoman, who had been in a proſperous condition, and might have continued ſo, if it had not been for the Publick Revolutions: *One time being ſomwhat pinched with the want both of Money and Proviſions, & not willing to make her condition known, ſhe with her Daughters went to hear Sermon, and after Sermon they fetching a walk, met with a Gentle Man, who firſt gave them an entertainment, and thereafter propoſed Marriage to the eldeſt Daughter, though he knew their preſent difficulties; it was accepted of, and as he was able, ſo he actually did maintain the Mother as well as the Daughter, handſomely and creditably all her lifetime.*

Thoſe who have ſmall ſenſe of GOD and his Providence, will be ready enough to mock at ſome of theſe Inſtances, and to name others but *chance*, and *accidental things*, *Hits of Fortune only*. But certainly conſidering all circumſtances they cannot be looked upon as other then *ſpecial and particular Providences*. It is unreaſonable to reject the truth of a thing, meerly becauſe we cannot underſtand how it could be brought about, and it is no leſs unreaſonable to refuſe to acknowledge it to be of God, be-

cauſe the ſame is not intimat to us by a Prophet, or particular Revelation. By theſe Inſtances and others which Men may gather from their Experience and Reading, it doth appear what GOD is able to do for us, and how many things he may contrive, and make to occur for relieving us out of the Straits and Troubles we fall into. But for preventing Mens miſtakes, it will not be amiſs to add a Caution, and it is this, That we do not think that we are only beholden to GOD and his Providence, when we meet with ſuch extraordinary occurrences, for GOD muſt ſtill be acknowledged the Author of all our Comforts, when they come to us in wayes Ordinar and Common, as well as when they are brought about by Miraculous Means and Methods, He is the Preſerver of our Life and Health, when we Eat, Drink and Sleep, no leſs then if we ſhould live without either of theſe: Our Proſperity is to be aſcribed to him, when it follows our Diligence and Induſtry in our Imployments, no leſs then when it falls our by Wayes and Methods extraordinary, and unthought of, to convince us of which, GOD doth ſometimes blaſt Natural Means, for that ſhews the Effects doth not wholly depend upon them. And as GOD muſt ſtill be acknowlegded the Author of all the good we enjoy, by what ever Means or Inſtruments it comes to us, ſo we muſt not expect any extraordinary manifeſtation of his favour and Providence but in extraordinary caſes, that is to ſay, when ordinary means and methods fail, and that ſuch ſpecial and ſingular inſtances of the *Divine Power and goodneſs*, are requiſit for Supporting a ſtaggering Faith, and the engaging our ſelves and others, to *a chearfull dependance upon* GOD in times of Trouble and Calamity. And though even in theſe caſes GOD ſhould not interpoſe himſelf thus extraordinarly on our behalf, yet there were no Reaſon to complain of the Want of ſpecial Care of us; we muſt not think they are all deſerted of GOD, who do not find Miraculous help and relief upon the want of Ordinary *Means*, for GOD may ſee it as much for their Spiritual good to leave them in theſe

these straits and difficulties, then it would be for their temporal good to be relieved out of them, so his Love is as great the one way as the other.

But thirdly, though the *Divine Presence* should not thus signally manifest it self in procuring *External Successes and Advantages*, yet it rendereth one happy, in that Peace and Tranquillity, Joy and Gladness doth ever flow from it, and the sense thereof. Inward Peace and Contentment and Gladness of Heart every man covets, but few rightly understand where or how it is to be had: It doth not flow from an abundance of *Temporal things* and an Affluence of *Worldly enjoyments*; one may have as much of these as heart can wish, and yet be without inward peace and satisfaction, and however it is but a weak and brittle peace, a very slender comfort which a man can suck from these *outward* and *perishing enjoyments*; when these things are not considered as tokens and expressions of the *Divine Favour*, they can yield no more but *vanity and vexation of Spirit*, as *Solomon* proves, by his manifold experiences. True Peace and Joy can be built upon no other foundation then GOD Himself, it results only from the enjoyment of him, and a sense and Assurance of his Favour and Love, if he be with us, he both can and will give us a Peace, which the whole World cannot give, and which none can take from us. *Thou wilt keep him*, saith the Prophet, *in perfect Peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee*, Isa. 26. 3 when others were carnestly craving and gaping for this, and the other Worldly delight, saying, *who will shew us any good?* David

prayes

prayes seriously, *LORD lift up the light of thy countenance upon us!* And he adds the reason why he desired this so much above all other things, because (saith he) *Thou hast put Gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their Corn and Wine increased*, Psal. 4. 6. 7. That is, he had more Joy from GODS Presence & Favour, than Men use to have in the time of Harvest when all things most abound with them. This Peace and Comfort, which GOD gives, is not necessarily annexed to outward Plenty and Prosperity, nor always accompanied with it. There may be outward Nothing but Want and Poverty, Sickness and Distress, Trouble and Affliction, and yet even in this case, God may inwardly afford a *joy unspeakable*, and a *peace which passeth all understanding*. Wherefore Christ tells his Disciples, that *in the World they should have trouble, but in me ye shall have peace*, as if he had said, be not afraid, for the trouble you meet with in the World, shall not bereave you of that peace I promise; and therefore also *Solomon* saith *Prov.* 14. 14. *That a good man shall be satisfied from himself*, that is, his satisfaction & comfort depends not *on External enjoyments*, or things without him, but he can draw it from within, through the intimat presence of GOD who doth always attend him. And

thus you see how desireable a thing the *Presence of* GOD is, and how happy he must needs be *whom GOD is with.*

Wherefore let all of us be so wise as to imitat *Jacob*, to seek this in the first place, and to prefer it before all things; Let us Pray to GOD that he may be with us, and even convenant with him, as *Jacob* doth here for this end; that in him, and by him, we may be supported. Doth not our experience tell every one of us that we are not able to sustaine our selves? and that we must be propt and upholden, or else we cannot choose but droup and fall. Man is like unto the Hop or Ivie, and such other weak Plants, which cannot stand of themselves, nor bear their own weight, but must have something to lean to: How miserable would we be if we were left to our selves, and destitute of all *external help?* how insignificant would one be if he had no other supplies, but what he could furnish from, and by himself? We have certainly no sufficiency or subsistence of our selves, and therefore we ought to cleave unto him, who only can stay and support us: If we lay the stress and comfort of our Souls upon any other thing besides GOD, it will be but like the Hop or Ivie's clasping about a Thistle, or Nettle, for want

want of an Oake, which brings both to the ground. Alas the generality of the World truſt to the Creatures! And how fooliſh a thing is it? For they prove to them as the *ſtaff of Egypt*, which the *Prophet* compares to a *broken reed, whereon if a man lean, it will go unto his hand and pierce it*, *Iſa:* 36: 6. The Creatures and all things in the World of themſelves are but fleeting vanities, and ſo muſt needs be but miſerable comforters, they are not durable, and though they were, yet they are not ſufficient, not ſtedable to all ends and purpoſes, they are ſo far from leſſening ones vanity, that oft-times they encreaſe it, ſo far from eaſing his mind, or ſupporting his burden, that they produce ſome more vexation of *Spirit*. *Riches is a vain thing to truſt to, for they make to themſelves wings and fly away*; As the Wiſe Man obſerveth, and as every Man may take notice of as well as he, and though they did ſtay more conſtantly, yet could they not anſwer all things: What could they profit a man in the day of Wrath? could they make his bed in His Sickneſs, or comfort him in his Languiſhing Condition? Could they eaſe his Pain, or aſſwage his grief? If he were ſeized with the Gout or *Stone*, reproached in his Name, or inwardly Wounded in *Spirit*. And what

may be ſaid of them is applicable to all other things, which one may or can poſſeſs. All *outward enjoyments* ſerve only to blow up Men's Fancies, and to feed their Hopes while they are in Eaſe and Quiet, and in no difficulty; but ſo ſoon as Trouble overtaketh them, and that they fall into Straits, then theſe Gayeties ſhrink away, and diſcover how little ſtrength or ſolidity is in them. He who confides in his Wealth, Greatneſs, Friends, Power, and ſuch like, builds upon a Sandy Foundation, a Foundation which will certainly fail him when he hath moſt need to be Sheltred and protected. The *Pſalmiſt* makes a ſuppoſition, *that Father and Mother may forſake us*, *Pſal.* 27. and indeed ſometimes they do it of their own accord, and ſometimes they are conſtrained thereto; Friends and Acquaintances, as *Job* obſerved, prove like *Winter-brooks*, which flow in wet Seaſons, but dry up when heat and drought comes: And then what comes of him, all whoſe Hope was placed in them? So who truſts to the World, truſts to no ſure Friend, it never proved true to any yet, it hath deceived both its own Children, and the Children of GOD, it hath forſaken both its Adorers, and thoſe who cared little for it, theſe who deſerved well, and thoſe whoſe

Merits

Merits were but ſmall; this the Hiſtory of every Age, and every Nation maketh out, we need not go beyond Seas, nor look back to former Times, to learn this; we need not fetch from Antiquity the Story of *Cræſus*, or *Darius*: We may prove this from the Hiſtory of our own Times, and from what hath been frequently tranſacted in this ſame *Britiſh-Iſle*, this Age, and the laſt. *Lord Cromwel of Eſſex, the Seymours, Bacon, Lord Verulam Chancellour of England*, and ſome others who had a higher Office than that of *Chancellour* amongſt our ſelves, are eminent proofs of this vanity and uncertainty of the *World*. But there is no need of bringing ſingle Inſtances, every day's obſervation furniſheth us with Proofes enough of this kind, ſo that he muſt be very blind, and very obdured, or very much beſotted, who doth not ſee the vanity and folly of truſting to the world and the things thereof. He that leaneth to theſe only ſhal fall, but he that truſteth in the LORD GOD, is Bleſſed, for he ſhall be upholden: *I have ſet the LORD*, ſaith *David, alwayes before me, becauſe he is at my right hand; I ſhall not be moved*; Pſal 16: 8: And again, P*ſal.* 46: 12: GOD *only is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble*, he is a refuge ſure & ſtedfaſt which neither can not will deceive us, and he is a

preſent help, becauſe he is always ready, hard at hand, and he is not more preſent than he is ſtedable and ſufficient. Wherefore as the P*ſalmiſt* goes on, *We need not fear though the Earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried unto the midſt of the Sea. O LORD of Hoſts, Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in thee*; for in GOD there is fulneſs which may fill our emptineſs, in him there is ſufficiency which can anſwer all our needs, there is no want in him, & that good which we crave, & which we are ſtill ſeeking after is in him and him only. It is reported of a Souldier, who contrived a Target or Shield, after ſuch a faſhion that it ſerved both to defend him from the darts of his Enemies, and was alſo uſeful to help him over Rivers and Waters, and that therefore he uſed to hugge and kiſs it, calling it the true companion of a Souldier, being ſerviceable both upon Land and Water. This ſhield is no unfit Embleme, to ſet forth the excellency and advantage of the *Divine Preſence* which ſerveth not for one ſeaſon, but for all, and is uſefull for every purpoſe: God is ſtedable both in Proſperity and Adverſity, in Health and Sickneſs, in Company and ſolitude, in Youth and old Age, at Sea and on the Land, in Peace and in War, in a Word, at all times and in all conditions;

He

He can Supply all our Wants, and afford us whatever we need; Nothing is so Difficult, but he can remove it, nothing so adverse, but he can make it advantageous; no case so perplexed, but he can resolve it, and no condition so Barren, but he can and will make it Comfortable, if he be with us: And if he once engage to be with us, he will not easily or lightly, forsake us; He will not cast us off upon surmises and suspicions, while we continue Faithfull and Dutifull to him, he will never leave us, or fail to be with us. Wherefore *Cardinal Wolsey* said truely, though very sadly for himself, *If I had served my GOD as well, and as faithfully, as I have done my King, he would never have deserted me.* And now that we may never have ground for such a complaint, that we may never have reason to bewail the folly of a vain and false Confidence, and trusting unto a deceitfull hold; and that especially when there is no time of redressing it, let us therefore, I say, presently and speedily *draw near to GOD*, let us seek him with our whole hearts, above all things, let us secure His Favour, and engage him to be with us. And then we shall tast and see better than words can unfold it, that *the* LORD *is good, and that*

that the Man is Bleſſed that truſteth in him; That it is better to truſt in the LORD, *than to put confidence in Man, in Princes, or in any thing under the Sun. None that wait on him ſhall ever be aſhamed: They truſted in thee,* ſaith the *Pſalmiſt, and were not confounded. Be of good courage and he ſhall ſtrengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the* LORD, *Pſal.* 22. 5. & 31. 24.

CHAP. III.

Why Jacob *mentioned other particulars, ſeeing the firſt Requeſt did comprehend them, and all things elſe he could ask. The ſecond Requeſt treated of the Reaſons of* Jacobs *Fear, and the lyableneſs of all Men generally to Dangers. No true Security, but in the* Divine Protection; *an Application of all.*

IN the preceeding Chapter we have ſpoken to *Jacob's* firſt Requeſt, and have ſhewed what it is *to have the* LORD *with one*, and how large and comprehenſive a Bleſſing it is; for in effect it contains not only the other two which follow, but all other things elſe, which one can reaſonably deſire: All the good that a man hath or which he can deſire, is meerly the effect of GOD'S *favourable preſence.* And ſo *Jacob* nee de

needed have asked no more to make him Happy, but *that GOD might be with him.* But becauſe the holding to generals, doth not ſufficiently alley or diſſipate our fears, this is only done when particulars are condeſcended on; therefore the Patriarch here as in general, he begs GOD'S Preſence, ſo that in particular he might know it, firſt by his being protected from theſe Dangers he was liable to, and ſecondly by the receiving a competent ſupply of his Wants, which two things fall next to be conſidered.

The ſecond Requeſt *Jacob* here made, is in theſe words, *If he will keep me in the way that I goe*; Which words ſpeak out, that he was both apprehenſive of Dangers, and that he thought none but GOD could truly defend him from them, or deliver him out of them. And indeed, firſt it was no wonder that he was apprehenſive of Dangers, the fear of his brother *Eſau's* wrath was one Principal Reaſon, why he left his Father's houſe, and ſeeing Friends and ſo near Relations bore him ſuch ill-will, and were ready to do him miſchief, what might he expect from Strangers, who were no wayes tied or obliged unto him? if *Abraham* and his Father *Iſaac* were in ſuch fear of their Lives when they ſojourned, that they denied

ed their Wives, calling them their Sisters, notwithstanding of their Power, and the numerous Family they had; What fear might he be in who had none with him but himself and was destitute of all help? And besides the Dangers which he might see himself exposed to through the malice and wickedness of men: *Jacob* could not but perceive innumerable others, which might befall him in the course of his *Pilgrimage*, the Wild Beasts of the Field might devour him, he might be entrapped unto Snares and Pitts; out of which there was no recovery. As he passed through the Waters, they might overwhelme him; the excessive heat of the Day, or the cold frosts of the Night, might bring on heavy Sicknesses and Diseases. It's impossible to reckon up all the evils which may befall a man, or to point at all the Sources from whence they flow; For we are lyable to Dangers from all the Elements, and from every part of the Creation; A thousand Mischances and Accidents may happen to put an end to our life, or to render it miserable. But our greatest and sorest enemies are those of our own Kind: Man is to Man the worst Foe: The Plague and Pestilence have killed their thousands, but Malice and Revenge ten thou-

thouſands; ſome Vineyards and Gardens have been taken away by the innundations of Rivers, but more by Covetouſneſs; As ſome Merchants and Seamen have been brought to ruine by Storms and Tempeſts, ſo others by Pirats and Theeves and the Barbarity of thoſe to whom they run for Shelter. And thus upon many accounts it is true, *That Man that is born of a Woman, is of few dayes and full of trouble*, as *Job* ſaith; which *Jacob* might now underſtand by his Reaſon, as afterwards he ſpoke it to *Pharaoh* from his experience, *Gen.* 47. 9. And it is indeed a Truth which ſtands now valid and undoubted, by ſome five thouſand years experience; For this life as a Heathen ſaith, ὁ βιος ἀληθως ἀλλα συμφορα, *it is not truly a Life, but a Calamity.* And the Wiſe Son of *Sirach*, hath obſerved, *that great Travel is Created for every man, and an heavy yoke is upon the Sons of* Adam, *from the day that they go out of their Mothers womb, till the day that they return to the Mother of all things*, Eccl. 40. 1.

Now as every Prudent Man foreſeeth the *Evils* and *Dangers* which he is lyable to, as he hath an apprehenſion both of the common Calamities of *Mankind*, and of the particular Troubles and Diſtreſſes which may befal him in his Circumſtances, ſo he

is desirous to guard against them and shun them. And unless we know some *Remedies* against the *Troubles* we may meet with, unless we know how to prevent them, or how to remove them, or how to be eased under them, and how to be safely delivered from them, our Mindes can enjoy no true Rest nor Quiet. And what Defence can one have unless he have it from GOD? How can any think to be keeped in safety, unless He do it whom *Jacob* here calls upon? *Except the LORD*, saith the Psalmist, *keep the City, the Watch men waketh but in vain*, Psal. 127. 1. And the same may be said of private Persons, for *if the LORD be not on our side*, if he do not look to us, and take a care of us, *When men rise up against us, they should certainly swallow us up quick, when their wrath is kindled against us:* certainly the *Waters* of trouble when they approach *should overwhelm us*; *And the stream should go over our Soul*, Psal. 124. 2, 3. But he is secure who hath GOD for his help; *I will* (saith *David*) *both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou LORD only makest me to dwell in safety*, Psal. 4. 8. and in the former Psalm, he tells us plainly, *I laid me down and slept, I awaked for the LORD sustained me; I will not be afraid of ten thousands of People that have set themselves*

themſelves againſt me round about. The like confidence may every one have who is intereſſed in the *Divine Favour*, for *he that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the Moſt High, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty. Becauſe thou haſt made the LORD which is my refuge, even the Moſt High thy Habitation: There ſhall no evil befall thee, neither ſhall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes, they ſhall bear thee up in their hands, leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a Stone. Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lyon, and Adder, the young Lyon, and the Dragon ſhalt thou trample under foot. Becauſe he hath ſet his Love upon me, therefore will I deliver him, I will ſet him on high becauſe he hath known my Name, Pſal.* 91. That is a great Comfort and Encouragement and a true Antidote againſt all Fear of Danger, or Trouble, which GOD giveth to his Servants and People; by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Thus ſaith the LORD, that created thee, O* Jacob, *and he that formed thee, O* Iſrael, *fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy Name, thou art mine: When thou paſſeſt through the waters I will be with thee, and through the Rivers they ſhall not overflow thee. When thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee, for*

I am the LORD *thy* GOD, *the Holy One of Iſrael, thy Saviour*, Iſa. 43. 1, 2.

Thus it appears what ſafety and ſecurity one hath whom GOD takes into his Protection, ſuch an one as *Eliphaz* ſpeaks, *Shal be in league with the ſtones of the Field, and the Beaſts of the Field ſhall be at peace with him*, *Job* 5. 23. Which we are not yet to underſtand, as if the Children and Servants of GOD, ſhould never be in any Danger, nor ever meet with any trial, no there is no ſuch thing promiſed, nor muſt it be expected: Dangers they may be in, enemies they may, they will, nay ſhall have: a life of perpetuall eaſe is no where promiſed, nor yet an exemption, from Trouble altogether; yea, all temporall Promiſes are to be interpreted *cum exceptione Crucis*, with an attendance of Afflictions and Dangers; as our Saviour intimats to us, *Mark* 10. 30. But the thing which GOD promiſed to do for his Own, and which all who ſincerely ſeek him may look for, is, that either *firſt* he will prevent and keep off Dangers, and ſuch evils as are threatned by men, or which we may have cauſe to fear from other things; or *Secondly*, that he will abate the Severity and Rigour of them when they come, & keep us from feeling too much the ſmart of them, by

by ſending ſomething or other at the ſame time, which may Eaſe and Comfort our Minds, that we may be the better able to bear it; or *thirdly*, he will procure us a Happy Iſſue and outgate ſo that we may not altogether be ſwallowed up by them; nay *fourthly*, that he will even make the Evils and Miſchiefs threatned, & inflicted, to turn to our Good, and to prove inſtrumental either to our *Spirituall* or our *Temporal advantage*; That even upon this account we may have reaſon to rejovce for the dayes wherein we have ſeen evil. This is the Nature and Manner of that Defence and Protection that we muſt look for from GOD; and to fortifie our Minds with the hopes of this, he hath not only given us his Promiſes; But laid before us ſeveral excellent examples of his *Providence*, towards his Saints and Servants in the Diſpoſal of their Calamities and Afflictions. Thus though *Abraham* was in hazard by coming to the land of *Canaan*, for being a Stranger, the Inhabitants might have been jealous of him, and have thought it their intereſt to hinder his ſettlement, yet GOD ſuffered no man to do him harme. With every diſaſter that befell *Joſeph*, GOD granted him ſome comfort, for he made him alwayes to find favour in the ſight of thoſe he

was

was among. *Moſes* was expoſed to periſh in the waters, but he ordained *Pharaoh's* Daughter to ſtep in, and take him up, which occaſioned him to get a more Liberal and noble Education, than what his Parents could have given him. *David* was often in danger both from Men and Beaſts, yet the LORD delivered him out of them all. The three Children were caſt into *Nebuchadnezzar's* fiery furnace; but he ſuffered not the *fire to have power upon their bodies, nor was a hair of their head ſinged, neither were their coats changed, nor had the ſmell of the fire paſſed on them*; *Dan.* 3. 27. *Daniel* alſo was thrown into the Lions Den, but GOD ſent his Angel, and ſhut the Lions mouths that they did him no hurt, Chap. 6. 22. And this ſame *Jacob* though he was hated by his Uncle and his Sons, and hotly purſued by them, yet when they overtook him, the LORD ſuffered them not to ſpeak either good or evil againſt him, or to do him any manner of miſchief. His Brother *Eſau* alſo, when he heard of his coming homewards, came out with four hundred Men againſt him, for to cut him and his off; but when they met, in ſteed of Fighting, they kiſſed each other, and gave mutual expreſſions and aſſurance of Kindneſs. So that as *Solomon* obſerveth,

When

When a Man's wayes pleaſe the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him; *Prov.* 16. 7. that is, He will either turn their Hatred into Love, and their Malice into Goodwill, or He will ſo bridle their Wrath, that they can do him no hurt, but be oblidged to behave themſelves as to the Outward part civilly. Of this we have many Proofs in all Ages throughout the World, but it is eſpecially evident in the Revolution of States: for in theſe turns of Affairs, it hath been often ſeen, that ſome have been preſerved and ſuffered to live in Peace, when in all Humane appearance, the contrary might been expected, yea was actually looked for by all; becauſe the letting them alone, was ſo little agreeable to the inclinations and intereſts of thoſe who had graſped the Power into their hands.

From all theſe therefore let us learn, *Firſt*, when we apprehend any cauſe of Fear, or foreſee any Evil coming, from whatſoever Airth it be, let us, I ſay, ſeek GOD as *Jacob* did here, and ſhelter our ſelves under His Protection; we may indeed and ought to uſe Prudent and Ordinary Means, but take heed that our chiefeſt confidence be in *GOD*, and his Help: Let us not be taken up with any thing we our ſelves can do, or with

any

any Refuge we may expect from others, as to forget to depend upon the LORD; and to call upon Him for His Aid and Aſſiſtance; *I will*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *lift up mine eyes unto the Hills from whence cometh my help*; And that we may know what Hills theſe were he meant of, he addeth, *my help cometh from the LORD, which made Heaven and Earth*; *Pſal.* 121. 1, 2. If thou wilt run to the *LORD*, he will certainly keep thee; other Keepers may fail thee, or they may be aſleep when thine Enemy comes upon thee, as *Abner* was and all the Hoſt with him, when *David* ſtole in upon *Saul*. But if GOD keep thee, thy Keeper will not ſlumber. *Behold*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *He that keepeth Iſrael ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep*, in the forecited place.

Secondly, Let us conſider whither we enjoy any Safety, have we eſcaped any Dangers, and Evils which were threatned us? Are the Storms and Clouds diſpelled which we feared? Do we at preſent enjoy any Eaſe and Quiet? If ſo, we may learn from what hath been ſaid, whom we are obliged to for this, and whom we muſt thank, even GOD, for He and none other is the Author of all this; For whoever or whatever were the immediat Inſtruments, He was the *Supreme Cauſe* and *Director*. Oweſt thou any thing to the

the Favour and Good-will of Men? It is he and he only, who turns their Hearts towards thee, it is GOD who Ordered and Contrived all these Favourable Circumstances which occasion thy present Peace and Safety: It is the LORD who is thy Keeper, He is thy Shade upon thy Right Hand; and therefore see that thou do acknowledge it by Rendering Him thy Hearty thanks, and ascribing the Praise of all to his *Almighty Power* and *Goodness*, and take heed lest your unthankfulness make him who hath hitherto been thy Friend, to turn thy Foe, and to give thee up to the will of thine Enemies.

Thirdly, and lastly, Doth any man want Peace? Hath his life been still full of disquiet and trouble? Wants he the Hearts and Good will of those he lives among? Where ever he goeth, and whatever he doth, doth he still find Enemies and Persons who bear him Malice and Ill will? Doth one Cross and Danger come upon the back of another, so that he hath no Rest or Security? Such an one may learn by what hath been said also where the fault lies, and who is to be blamed for it: 'tis perhaps because he hath never sought the LORD, nor studied so to order his Wayes, as to Please GOD, he hath trusted too much to himself, His Wit

and Induſtry, his Wealth, Power, or Friends, becauſe of theſe he hath thought with himſelf, that it ſhould be alwayes well with him, and therefore he hath not cared much for GOD; and therefore GOD hath ſet himſelf to vex and trouble him. For as the *Eyes of the LORD are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their cry: ſo the Face of the LORD is againſt them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the Earth*; *Pſal.* 34. 15, 16. Becauſe *David* diſpleaſed the LORD in the matter of *Uriah*, therefore 'tis ſaid, *That He raiſed him up many Enemies.* Let every Man therefore Try and Examine himſelf, let him ſearch his wayes, and ſee what ſin lyeth at his door, and repent of it; and let him turn unto the LORD, and He will cauſe His Face to ſhine Favourably upon him, happy ſhall he be, and it ſhall be well with him. Make GOD thy Friend, and *He ſhall preſerve thee from all evil: He ſhall preſerve thy Soul. The LORD ſhall preſerve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth and even forevermore*; *Pſal.* 121. 7, 8.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Jacob's third Requeſt conſidered, in reſpect of himſelf; Though the generality of Men ask more, yet all wiſe Heathens and Jews have preferred this Portion to all Others. The confining our Deſires to this, is ſhewed by ſeverall inſtances to be Wiſe and Reaſonable; and that therefore every one ought to content himſelf with his Competency. All Mens Competency is not the ſame. What is the Duty of him, who hath got his Competency? what of him who hath leſs? and what his, who hath more?

Jacob's third Requeſt, which he here makes, is for Maintenance, this is the laſt thing about which he *conditions with GOD*; And in this particular he was not Immodeſt and Exorbitant; His Deſires were far from being Inordinate and unreaſonable, for he craves only what was *ſimply neceſſary* and Requiſit for the Support of his Life: He askes no more, but that *GOD* would *give him Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on*; without theſe he could not live, and having theſe he thought he had enough, all that was Needful or Sufficient, as to his Preſent State and

Condition. And that *Jacob* confined his Deſires to this Sober Meaſure of Food and Raiment is the more obſervable, ſeeing we find a little before, GOD making him large Profer's, and great Promiſes of the *whole Land* in which he was. It might been thought that he would at leſt taken in GOD'S own Promiſe unto him, as one of the Conditions of his *Vow*, and that he ſhould have ſaid, "well, if thou wilt indeed give me all "this which Thou haſt Promiſed, and do "all theſe things to me which Thou haſt "ſpoken, and make me ſo Great, and ſo "Rich a Man, then *Thou ſhalt be my* "GOD": But he takes another Method, and Proceeds after another Manner, he paſſes by all theſe large Profers of Wealth and Greatneſs, and pitches only upon a meer ſimple *Sufficiency of Food and Raiment*, thinking it Improper and Unreaſonable, and a peece of Immodeſty for him to ſeek more than was neceſſay for him. If GOD gave more, it was an Act of His Bounty; if his Wiſdom and Goodneſs thought fit to beſtow a larger Allowance, and a greater Meaſure of theſe *Temporal things*, it might be matter of Praiſe and Thankful acknowledgment; But it did not become him to preſcribe and ſet down Rules to the *Soveraign* LORD

LORD of Heaven and Earth: he knew his Happineſs was not tied to theſe outward things, and that Man's life did not conſiſt in the abundance of theſe things which he poſſeſſed; Food and Raiment was ſufficient for the ſupport of his Life, and therefore he craved no more.

The generality of the World are otherwiſe minded, their deſires are not bounded with *Jacob's*, they are not ſatisfied ordinarily with the portion of Food and Raiment, however ſufficient it be of it ſelf; they are not contented with meer neceſſary Supplies; but greedily covet a *Superabundance*, which is both their Folly and their Sin. We have ſhewed how wiſe and underſtanding the *Patriarch* was in the two former Particulars, and have propoſed him as our Patern, and if we will conſider it, we ſhall find him to be no leſs Wiſe in this, and no leſs Worthy of our Imitation. Wherefore let us ſet this holy Mans Example before us, and let us moderat our Deſires after the things of this Life, according to this Meaſure and Model, which he gives and ſets to himſelf. and to which all Wiſe Men have ever proportioned their Deſires. Thus *Agur* prayed, *Give me neither Poverty, nor Riches: feed me with food Convenient for me*; Prov. 30. 8.

30: 8. And as *Solomon* Contemned Riches and much Wealth ſo far, as that he would not ask them from GOD when he had it in his choice what to ask, ſo he hath Adviſed us to Deſpiſe them, and not to ſeek after them. *Labour not*, ſaith he, *to be rich; Ceaſe from thine own Wiſdom*; Prov: 23: 4. As if he had ſaid, thou art not wiſe, thou underſtands not they ſelf ſufficiently, if thou think it a fine or a good thing to be Rich, and to have great abundance. *St. Paul* judged this, which *Jacob* here required, ſufficient matter of Contentment, *having food and raiment*, ſaith he, *Let us be therewith content*; 1. Tim: 6: 8: And we might inſtance even in many Heathens, who ſought no more than a meer Competency, and in their Judgement preferred that to the greateſt affluence of Worldly Wealth, and Grandeur. *Horace* calls this, *Auream mediocritatem*, a Golden Competency, becauſe it is the beſt of Conditions; and elſewhere he ſaith,

cui ---- *Bene eſt ~~mi~~ Deus obtulit*
Parca, quod ſatis eſt, manu.
---Thrice happy he, to whom the
wiſe indulgency of Heaven,
With ſparing hand, but juſt enough hath given.

Plutarch in his *Banquet of the ſeven Wiſe Men*, brings

brings in this Queſtion, *Which is the happieſt Family?* Which one of the *Sages* anſwers thus, *Where Neceſſaries are not wanting, and Superfluities are not ſought.* How much *Seneca* ſpeaks in the commendation of a Moderate State, and how much in the contempt of Riches, is known to all who have ſeen any thing of his Writings; and the following lines ſpeak out his ſentiments thereof,

Fata ſi liceat mihi
Fingere arbitrio meo, &c.
Tuta me media vehat
Rita decurrens via.
If all my Wiſhes, I could have
I for Felicity,
No other thing would crave
then Mediocrity.

It is a ſaying of *Cicero*, in his book, *de Officiis*, *Nihil eſt tam anguſti animi tamque parvi quam amare divitias*, that is, Nothing doth more bewray ignorance, & meanneſs of Spirit, than the love of Riches. And certainly to crave and be deſirous of more than what is Competent for the Maintenance and Support of our Lives, is both inconſiſtent with that Dependence & *Subjection* we owe GOD, and doth alſo beſpeak a great deal of Vanity, Folly and Inconſideratneſs.

GOD who is the *great Maſter* and *Governour*

nour of the World, he Allowes and Commands, that we wait upon Him for the neceſſary Supplies of our Life; yea, this much we may lawfully ſeek from Him. Wherefore our *Saviour* in that Prayer which he preſcribed his *Diſciples*, he taught us to Pray for *our daily bread*, comprehending under that all other neceſſary Supplies; According to that of *St. Auguſtine*, *quando rogamus panem quotidianum, quicquid nobis propter carnem noſtrum neceſſarium eſt rogamus*; that is. when we aske our Daylie Bread, we alſo aske all other things neceſſary for the Preſervation and Comfort of our Lives; And as it becomes us to pray for this, that we may own and ſhew our Dependence upon *GOD*; ſo it becomes us to reſt ſatisfied with the ſeeking of it, and to be contented when we have gotten it: To aske and be deſirous of more, is but immodeſty and doth bewray an Unruly and Stubborn and Unreaſonable Diſpoſition; As the holy Father we juſt now mentioned ſaith, "Food and Rai-"ment is neceſſary, without it we cannot live; "there is no immodeſty in ſeeking it; But "it is impudency to ask Riches, it is one thing "to ask, what may nouriſh our Pride and "Vanity, and another thing to ſeek only "what is proper for the ſuſtenance of our life.

Aliud

" *Aliud eſt unde ſuperbias aliud unde vivas* ".

When a Servant hath received his Allowance, is ſufficiently Fed and Cloathed, what an inſolency is it for him to deſire his Maſter to give Superfluities over and above what he needs, meerly to pleaſe his Fancy, or to gratifie his Humour? It is not Diſcretion to ſet down Meaſures, and to preſcribe what ſhould be given, where nothing is due, Now GOD owes us nothing, He is not oblidged to give us any thing at all: But only becauſe we are his Creatures, he is Ready and Willing to preſerve us, and hath in ſome ſenſe oblidged Himſelf to Maintaine and Cheriſh that Life he hath given, which yet gives no Allowance to ſeek for the ſatisfying of our unreaſonable, and unſatiable Appetites. *Neceſſaries* we may call for but *Superabundance* and more than enough, we ought not; ſeeing we Live meerly by the Bounty of *Almighty GOD*, we ought not to carve for our Selves, but the Alms and Portion which He beſtowes we ſhould take Thankfully, and ſit down Contentedly therewith. It is obſerved that though we have ſeveral other failings of the Servants of GOD mentioned in Scripture, yet there is not one inſtance of an immoderate deſire for *Temporall Goods* in any one of

them. For as the exceſſive Love hereof is inconſiſtent with the true Love of GOD, ſo the expreſs deſire of them is arrogant Preſumption which the Servants of GOD are ever carefull to keep themſelves free of.

And as it is Immodeſty and Undiſcretion in regard of GOD to be deſirous of more than a *Competency*, then what is ſufficient to maintain us in our State and Condition: So really it is an unreaſonable and vain thing in it ſelf. To what purpoſe is it to ſeek more than that we ſtand in need of? All that is over and above is perfectly vain, uſeleſs, and unreaſonable; And it is no real, but an imaginary Satisfaction only which a Man can promiſe to himſelf thereby. If one keep the Wealth by him which he ſtands not in need of, if he hoord it up in his Cheſts and Coffers, and put it to no uſe, what is he the better of it? What doth it really ſignifie more to him, than if it were yet an hundred fathom under Ground in the Bowels of the Earth, except that he hath a great dale of Care, Fear, Anxiety, and Trouble which he would want, if it were ſtill there?

Fond Man! what good or beauty can be found?
In heaps of Treaſure buried under ground?

Which

Which rather then diminiſht, e're to ſee,
Thou wouldſt thy ſelf too buried with them be;
And what's the difference, is't not quite as bad,
Never to uſe, as never to have had.

Cowley.

Dionyſius the *Elder*, underſtanding a certain Citizen had Gold hid in his houſe, he commanded it to be brought to him; But afterwards when the ſame Perſon went to ſojourn in another City, and did Trade with a little which he had ſtoilen away; *Dioniſius* ſent for him, and reſtored him all back again, becauſe he began to uſe his Wealth, and to leave off the rendring an uſeful thing uſeleſs; Thereby ſhewing that the true uſe of Money is not to hoord it up, but to lay it out in ſuch and ſuch wayes as tend to the *Publick good*;

----- *Surely uſe alone,*
Makes Money not a contemptible ſtone.

Herbert.

Again, if one ſhould reſolve to uſe and ſpend it on his Family and Houſe keeping, if a Man deſign to keep a great Retinue, and to live up ſutably to the Abundance which he poſſeſſeth; Yet even in that caſe, there is more of Fancy than Solid Pleaſure and Satisfaction; *When goods encreaſe*, ſaith Solomon, *they are encreaſed that eat them: and*

what good is there to the Owners thereof, ſaving the beholding of them with their eyes; *Eccl.* 5. 11. Which truely is a very ſmall and vain good; Let a Man have never ſo much of this World, yet even in that abundance his Natural neceſſities are not better ſupplied, than if he had only a *ſimple competency*; of all his Diſhes, he fills but one Belly, & of all his fair Houſes, and Rich furniſhed Rooms, he can lodge but in one at once, and neither the Variety, nor the Fineneſs and Delicacy of the things he enjoyes, doth ſecure from Death, or Sickneſs, and Diſeaſes, and the other incumbrances of our Life. *Mans life*, ſaith our *Saviour*, *conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things he poſſeſſeth*; *Luke* 12. 15. That is, a Man's Life is not prolonged thereby, he muſt not neceſſarily live as long as he hath any thing to ſpend, even though he have *much goods laid up for many years*, his *Soul may be very ſoon required of him*, as the Parable there ſheweth. And as the Abundance maketh not our Life the longer, ſo neither much the better. True Pleaſure and Contentment doth not alwayes follow great Meaſures of this Worlds goods; he that hath little, and but a *moderate competency*, paſſeth his dayes ordinarly more Quietly and Contentedly, than he that hath much Riches, and

and his ſleep is alwayes ſounder. The ſweeteſt ſleep doth not neceſſarily follow Beds of Doun, and Pillows of Silk. *The ſleep*, ſaith Solomon, *of a labouring Man is ſweet, whither he eat little or much; but the abundance of the Rich will not ſuffer him to ſleep*; *Eccl:* 5: 12. Our Natures may be well enough ſupplied with little, *Natura paucis contenta*, and ordinarily when that little and *moderate competency* is only enjoyed, it affordeth greater Pleaſure, and more Satisfaction than Exceſs and Abundance. What is ſuperfluous and redundant commonly turns to our Hurt and Dammage, breeds Surfeitings and Loathings, Pains and Diſeaſes, and doth Violence even to our *Natural Complexions*, and ſo tendeth to the *ſhortning of our dayes.*

But farther a State of Mediocrity or Competency proportioned unto our Neceſſities is far more deſirable than Great or Superfluous Abundance, becauſe this condition is more ſafe and ſecure, and leſs ſubject to changes and alterations. "A man in this "State (as is well expreſ- "ſed by the Excellent Lord Juſtice *Hales*) will not be ſo "readily diſquieted through "the malice and envy of others; "as he who is in an Eſtate of External Grandeur, *Hales Contemp. part first pag.* 181.

"deur, Wealth, and Power; For he "who is in the former State, hath nothing "that others do covet or desire, but the lat- "ter hath gotten the Golden Ball that the "generality of mankind are fond to have, "and restless till they have gotten it, which "makes the Man's estate unquiet and un- "safe, because he hath many competitours "for what he enjoys, which are continual- "ly endeavouring to trip up his Heels. "Just as we see when a Bird hath gotten a "booty or prey, all other birds of prey are "following and catching after it, and ever "molesting him that hath it. He that en- "joys much either of Honour or Wealth "or Power is the *object of the envy of other men*, "which is a busie, restless pernicious Humor, "and ever picking Quarrels and finding "Faults, and studying and endeavouring the "ruine of its object. Whereas a *State of Me-* "*diocrity* is a state of Quietness, and free from "the Assaults and Shafts of this Pestilent "Companion". The great Difference of these *two states* may be well seen in *Jacob* the Person in the Text, for whilst he had nothing but his Staff, his *Bread to eat*, and *his Raiment to put on*; the necessary supplies of Nature, he was in great Quiet and Safety; but so soon as Wealth encreased upon him, his Uncle

Uncle and his Sons firſt envied him, and then plotted againſt him, ſo that he ſaw no other Security but to fly for it. And how many ſuch inſtances may we collect from the preſent Age, and even too within this *Iſle*? How many lived Happily and Contentedly until they were raiſed unto places of Dignity and Advantageous Emolument? How hath this engaged them into a life of Strife and Debate? they have been ſo far from Augmenting even their temporal *happineſs*, that many have loſed it altogether, their Enemies not being content to take away what was ſo much envyed by their ambition and covetouſneſs, unleſs they alſo reduced them to circumſtances worſe than their former, that they might not be in a capacity of revenging themſelves

Beſides all this, ſuch a competent Condition as we are ſpeaking of, is of it ſelf by far perferrable to any other, becauſe there is leſs care and trouble attending it, and it affords a man time and leaſure for acquiring knowledge & vertue, and for minding and waiting upon the Great Concerns of another World. He that either wants what he ſtands in need of, or hath much more, both of them are often neceſſitat to be a drudge to this life: all their thoughts

thoughts,& cares,are for the moſt part about the World, and the things of the World, which debaſeth a man very much, and is a ſtouping of him far below the deſigne of his Creation, he was created for the enjoyment of GOD, for converſe with his *Maker*, and the Exerciſe of *Divine vertues*, which both a ſtate of want and a ſtate of ſuperfluity and abundance doth very much hinder and divert him from. This made *Agur* pray againſt both, *give me*, ſaith he, *neither poverty nor riches*; *not Riches*, *leſt I be full and deny thee*, *and ſay*, *who is the LORD*. *Nor yet poverty*, *leſt I put forth my hand and ſteal*, *and take the Name of my GOD in vain*. There be a great many Temptations in both, but more in a *ſtate of plenty* and fulneſs, than in want. *They that will be rich*, ſaith S. Paul, *fall into a temptation and a ſnare*, *and into many fooliſh and hurtfull Lusts*, *which drown men in Deſtruction and Perdition*. 1 Tim. 6. 9. This *Crates* that *Pagan Philoſopher* had ſome ſenſe of, when he threw his money into the Sea, declaring, *that he would drown it*, *leſt it ſhould drown him*; he might indeed have found many better and more Vertues Wayes of diſpoſing it, for preventing the miſchief thereof; But however this ſhews, that even *Natural Wiſdom* teacheth that there be more

more inconveniency in Having, then in Wanting riches. "Of all Conditions in the World (saith that excellent Personage formerly mentioned) a redundant and over plentifull condition is most subject to the most Dangerous and Pernicious Temptations in the World; As namely forgetfulness of GOD; Self-Dependence, Pride, Insolence, Oppression, Injustice, Unquietness of Mind, Excess, Luxury, Intemperance, contempt of others. I have very often, saith he, known these persons that have carried themselves stedfastly and commendably in a Condition of Mediocrity; nay have been able to bear with Virtue the shocks of these Temptations that arise from want and Poverty: yet when in the late times being advanced to Wealth, Power, and Command, they were lost, and could not bear the Temptations that attended Grandeur, Wealth, and Power. So that the sun of wealth and Prosperity quickly disrobed them of that mantle of Innocence, Piety, and vertue that they keept about them against the Stormes of Wants and necessities". *Ibid pag.* 180. And perhaps there be few, but from our experience we may learn and observe

the like. Though Men little regard it, yet certainly it merits our conſideration, ſeeing it was ſpoken by our Saviour, *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, that a rich man ſhall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; and again, I ſay unto you, it is eaſier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of GOD, Mat.* 19.

Thus you ſee what Reaſon and Wiſdom there is in this Requeſt of *Jacob's*, and how much it doth really concern us to bound & meaſure our Deſires thereto. Food and Raiment we may and ought to ſeek, becauſe without this, we cannot live conveniently and comfortably; but to ask more, as it is Inſolent and Immodeſt in regard of GOD, ſo it is Vain and Unreaſonable in it ſelf, unſafe in reſpect of others, and very Dangerous for our ſelves.

Quod nimium eſt fugito, parvo gaudere memento
Tuta mage eſt puppis, modico quæ flumine fertur,
Deſpice divitias ſi vis animo eſſe beatus.
Quas qui ſuſpiciunt mendicant ſemper avari.
Fly what 's too great, be with ſmall things content,
That Ship 's moſt ſafe to which ſmall gales are ſent;
Would'ſt happy be? For wealth do not much care,
Who it affect, Beggars and greedy are.

Wherefore let every one in the firſt place ſit down and wiſely conſider what is their com-

competency, their convenient Food, as *Agur* terms it; for it is certain that this varies according to the various conditions of Men: Some require more and some leſs, the ſame meaſure doth not fit all; a ſingle Man needs not ſo much as he who hath a Family, a Privat Perſon ſo much as a Publick, one in a low Condition, as he of better Rank and Quality, every Man's Neceſſities are according to his Station, Calling, and Circumſtances; and therefore as *Zeba* and *Zalmunna* ſaid to *Gideon*, *as is the man, ſo is his ſtrength*; ſo we may ſay in this Caſe, *as is the Man ſo is his competency.* But whatever it be, having found it, let us Humbly and Modeſtly ask it of GOD as *Jacob* doth here, and let us not think to obtain it without him, for unleſs he give it, we cannot come by it; *It is vain for you to riſe up early, to ſit up late, to eat the bread of ſorrows, for ſo he giveth his beloved ſleep*, Pſal: 127. If the eyes of the inferiour Creatures, as the *Pſalmiſt* tells us, *do all waite upon GOD, that he may give them their meat in due Seaſon*; how much more doth this become us, to whom he hath given reaſon and underſtanding, by which we know that our food and raiment are his peculiar gifts; It is true they who ſeek not GOD, may come to have theſe

things; For wee ſee the wicked and ungodly have them mutually in abundance: But then they cannot be conſidered as tokens of *Gods* love, *as effects of his ſpecial favor and particular care, and as pledges of better things in the life* Coſt *to come, and ſo they loſe their beſt ſavour, they want that which would give them the ſweeteſt taſte.* It is the love of the giver which puts a value upon the Gift, and ſo our chief delight in theſe temporal things ſhould be, becauſe they come from GOD, and witneſs his favour for us; otherwiſe they can afford but a Mean and brutiſh Satisfaction, no greater then what an Ox or Horſe, hath over their fodder. Now, who waite not upon GOD, though they have their ſuſtenance & more, yet it is not given them as a Bleſſing; they have reaſon rather to look upon it as a Curſe, that they may be among thoſe whoſe portion is in this life only. *Omnia temporalia Dei munera ſunt, ne putetis quod aliquis illa poſſit dare niſi unus Deus.* Auguſt: And as we ſhould ask our neceſſary ſuſtenance, as it becomes us to ſeek our dole and allowance, ſo let us be carefull not to offend him by craving arrogantly more for which we have neither Precept, nor yet any Patern of any wiſe or holy Man in all the Scripture. But we muſt not content our ſelves to ſeek this

this by Prayer only, it behoveth us to seek it, and also to wait upon GOD for it, in the use of these prudent lawfull and ordinary Means which his Providence hath appointed; for 'tis this way ordinarily that he gives it, and by which we must expect it. Prayer ought to be used, but it must not be wholly rested in; When the LORD directs us to Pray for our *dayly bread*, the meaning is not, that GOD may give it without our own *endeavours*; we do not Pray that GOD may Feed, and Cloath us by a *miracle*, as he did the Prophet *Elijah* and the children of *Israel* in the Wilderness: But only that he would blesse our diligence and industry in those honest Courses which his *Wise Providence* hath Ordained and Established, that thereby we may procure the means of *our subsistence* and the *comforts of our lives*. That sentence which GOD past upon Man after the fall, stands yet unrepealed, *In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread*; This is still in force it binds all, and it is in the observance hereof, that we are to expect our necessary Maintenance and Support. Only in following these *Ordinary means* and *Methods*, we ought to beware of all *immoderate care*, *anxiety* and *Solicitude*, *taking no thought what we should eat, or what we should drink*, *or wherewithall we shall*

shall be cloathed ; *For our Heavenly Father who feeds the Fowles of the Air, and provides for the Beasts of the Field, and cloathes the Lillies*, will not suffer us his Children who are Created after his Image, to want the necessaries of our life. He knows before hand what things we need, and if we trust in Him he will not fail to bestow them. *The young Lions* saith the Psalmist, *may lack and suffer hunger, but they that fear the LORD, shall not want any good thing* ; Psal. 34.

In the next place, it will be fit and proper that we consider our present State and Condition, and what be those things which GOD hath already bestowed on us, that accordingly we may know how to behave and demean our selves suitably.

First, If GOD hath blessed us with a *competency*, if we find that we have a sufficient Supply of our Wants, and a convenient Support and Maintenance in our present Condition, then we ought to be well Contented, and also should be very thankfull to *GOD* who is the author thereof: we ought to Bless and Praise Him, who hath put us into such a convenient Condition, as is every wise Mans choice, and wherein there is such Freedom from Cares and Anxieties, Molestations and Envyings of others, which

which gives ſuch Peace and ſecurity, and allowes Time and Opportunity for improving our ſelves in Vertue and Wiſdom, and acquainting our ſelves with GOD here, that wee may enjoy him for ever hereafter. The Man is truly Happy who is in this caſe, and may ſay with *David*, *the lines art fallen unto me in pleaſant places, yea I have a Goodly heritage, therefore I will Bleſs the LORD*;&c. Pſal: 16. 6. and 7.

But ſecondly ſome will perhaps ſay, that they have not a Competency as yet, that they are ſo far from having enough, that they are in *Wants*, *Straits*, & *Difficulties*, and indeed it may be ſo; however let them take heed that they miſtake not their caſe and Condition; perhaps you may call that a State of Want which is really a Competency; you may perhaps judge that Poverty, which ſome will look upon as Fulneſs; and every Reaſonable Man will count ſufficient: The Table you diſpiſe, ſome would think a feaſt, the cloathes you diſdain to wear, another would be vain of, that which you call a trouble and Mortification, ſober and Rational Perſons would not complain of, but eſteem it Eaſie and Comportable, and then it is only needfull to rectify thy Judgement, and to take up a true eſtimate of things for to know the

the Happineſs and Sufficiency of thy preſent Lot. For to be informed of the inconveniency of our preſent Condition, we muſt not proceed by thoſe Meaſures which Pride, and Vanity, and Luxury, and Voluptuouſneſs, and corrupt Cuſtomes lay down, but we muſt examine and conſider things according to their true Nature and Uſe, and as Sober and Modeſt Reaſon doth dictate. *Magis nos docere debet judicium veritatis, quam præjudicium conſuetudinis.* If we have wholeſome Food, though it be not Rare, Coſtly or Delicious, if we have Cloaths that are Uſeful and Comely, though they be not Gaudy and Splendid, and for great Oſtentation, if we have as much as ſerves to relieve our *preſent neceſſities*, and to afford us Neceſſary and Convenient Accommodation, though not for Laviſh and Prodigal Spending, or ſo much as others have, or equal to what our Anceſtours enjoyed, in this caſe we have no Reaſon to complain. And if we do complain in theſe Circumſtances we ſhall never be ſatisfied in any, he that is not contented with a Moderate and Reaſonable *Competency* will never think the greateſt Abundance enough; when Mens deſires once go beyond their neceſſities, no meaſure of Wealth or Riches can ſtay them; *Creſcit*

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amor nummi, quantum ipſa pecunia creſcit: And *Solomon* tells us, *he that loveth Silver, viz.* with an immoderate Love, *ſhall not be ſatisfied with Silver; nor he that loveth abundance with Increaſe, Eccl.* 5. 10. The beſt and readieſt way to become Rich is not to ſeek to increaſe our Subſtance, but to Moderate and Abridge our Deſires. The true way to fill a leaking Veſſel is not to carry it to the Ocean or ſome great River, but to ſtop the leaks, for ſo long as they continue, it were no more poſſible to fill it at the Ocean, then at ſome ſmall Rivolet, even ſo if we would draw Contentment and Satisfaction from our preſent State and Condition, we muſt not let our Deſires reach farther then what is Juſt and Equitable, otherwiſe the whole World will not be able to content or ſatiat them.

But ſuppoſe that it ſhall be found even by the narroweſt Meaſures, that thou art in an Eſtate of Want, and haſt not a Sufficiency anſwerable to thy Neceſſities; in this caſe indeed thou haſt not full matter of Contentment, but however thou muſt Labour to ſupport thy ſelf with Patience, conſidering that this is the Lot which the *All-wiſe GOD* hath given thee to whom thou oweſt an intire Submiſſion, and who may have ap-

pointed this, as to puniſh thy former Follies and Sins, ſo likewiſe both to further thy greater good and alſo to prevent greater miſchiefs and evils which might have befallen thee. And though thou mayeſt very lawfully ſeek to be out of this preſent *Neceſſitous Condition*, (providing it be by Lawfull Means and Moderat Cares and Endeavours) yet thou haſt no reaſon to Fret and Repine thereat: For conſider, that as thy *Eſtate is little here, ſo thy account ſhall be the leſs hereafter*, and thou art alſo at preſent delivered from many Dangerous Temptations, which perhaps thou couldſt not well have reſiſted, and art rid of many Incumbrances and Intanglements which would either have hindred thy Progreſs in Vertue and Holineſs altogether, or elſe rendred it very difficult. Remember alſo that even in this State there are fair and good Opportunities of wining Heaven and Eternal Life, as well as in any other, and if that be ſufficiently ſecured, it's the leſs matter what come of other things: if we be ſure to be happy hereafter, we need not be much concerned how we fare here. And 'tis certain that neither our Praiſe nor our Reward depends upon any *external condition* of this World, but upon our living Vertuouſly and Uprightly, Devoutly and Piouſly

Piouſly in whatſoever Condition GOD puts us. The ſtate of Man in this World may be compared to a play, whereof we all are the Actors; and as in a play it is of no great moment, what part a Man act, providing he act the part alloted him handſomely, and well, for he that acts the part of a Servant or Clown rightly, gets as much Praiſe and Reward as he who playes the part of a Prince: So let it not trouble thee, whither this or the other Condition hath fallen into thy ſhare, whither GOD hath given thee this or the other Station to ſhew thy ſelf in, but whatever it be, do thou what becomes thee, walk ſuitably to thy place and Circumſtances, ſee that thou carry thy ſelf ſo as that GOD may be Glorified, thy ſelf Prailed. and others Edified, and when the Play is done, when this Life is ended, great ſhall be thy Reward.

Laſtly if thou find that GOD hath put thee into an Eſtate of Redundance & Plenty ſo that beſides the liberal ſupplies of thy Neceſſities thou haſt much conſiderably over and above; if ſo, then thou oweſt firſt great thanks to GOD for his Bountyt and Liberality to thee, whilſt many others in the World are Pinched and Strained: Thou

broughteſt as little into the World with thee as they did, and therefore if the *Divine Providence* had not made the difference and kept it up, thou ſhouldeſt have felt their Poverty, and they might have enjoyed thy preſent Plenty. Make therefore an thankfull Acknowledgement unto GOD'S Goodneſs, as this *Jacob* did afterwards upon the like Conſideration, *O GOD*, ſaid he, *I am not Worthy of the leaſt of all the merciet and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant, for with my ſtaff I paſſed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands*; Gen. 32. 9: 10.

But as thou art thus oblidged to Gratitude and Thankfulneſs, ſo in the next place you will do well to conſider, what Warrineſs and Circumſpection and Watchfulneſs thy preſent condition requires and calls for. A Plentifull State is Difficult and Dangerous it produceth many and ſtrong Temptations, ſo that thou haſt need to take head to thy ſelf that thou be not overcome; keep a ſtrict Watch and Guard over all thy wayes, that thou wax not Proud and Wanton, that thou be not enſnared to Rioting and Exceſs, that thou oppreſs not thy Inferiours: Let not thy Abundance make thee Forgetfull of GOD, or keep thee from the thoughts of another

another World, for if theſe be the effects and Conſequences of thy Plentifull Condition, it is a Curſe and not a Bleſſing, and it hath brought thee to utter Ruine and Deſtruction, if thou thus abuſe thy Plenty, thou ſhall one day pay ſadly for it; and the more thou Satiats thy ſelf here, the greater ſhall be thy Penury and Want hereafter: Then thou ſhalt feel the folly of Abuſing Plenty after this ſort, and ſhalt be Glad to have one ſent that he may Dip *the tip of his finger in water to cool thy tongue*, but it ſhal not be granted; in ſteed of this thou ſhalt hear, Son, *Remember that thou in thy life time receiveds't thy good things*; Luk: 16. 25. Now he that would not have ſuch a Comfortleſs *Memorandum* to be given unto him in the other World, let him Remember to walk warrily in this, let him not give himſelf to Pride and Luxury and Voluptuouſneſs, but let him Exerciſe himſelf to Godlineſs, and keep that charge which the Apoſtle gives, and which he commands all Paſtours of the Church to give them that are Rich in this World, *that they be not high minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, laying up in ſtore for them-*

themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life; 1. Tim. 6. 17. Remember that thou art no more then a Steward, of what more then ſufficiently ſerves thy ſelf, and that thou muſt be accountable for it to him who truſteth thee with it, not that it might ly idlely by the, or that thou mighteſt abuſe it to the Maintenance of Impiety and Profaneneſs; But he gave it thee that thou mighteſt there by ſhew thy Wiſdom, manifeſt thy Vertue, glorifie his Name, and profite Mankind; and eſpecially to diſtribute to the Neceſſities of thoſe that want. We miſtake it very much if we think GOD is ſo fond upon one ſort of men more then another; that he giveth in abundance to the one for to feed, and Pamper their Luſts to the full, and is content in the mean time that others ſtarve; no certainly, GOD can be accuſed of no ſuch partiality; but as His Wiſdom hath not thought fit to make an equal Diſtribution of this Worlds Wealth among Men, ſo the Reaſon why he hath given to one, and withholden from another, is, that the one might learn the Vertue of Patience, and the other exerciſe Charity, and that by ſuch mutuall Giving and Receiving, Love, Unity and Concord may be preſerved, and kept up

in the World. *Quando Dominus Pauperem facit, Divites probat,* ſaith the Father, *when GOD maketh one Poor, it is to try the Rich,* 'tis to put them to a proof of their love to Him, and of their Kindneſs to their Brethren. He therefore who keeps all to himſelf, or imploies it only for his own proper uſe, is an unjuſt Steward, and doth pervert GOD'S Deſign in giving it him. *Non ſolum Avarus eſt qui rapit aliena, ſed ille Avarus eſt qui cupide ſervat ſua,* that is, *He is not only Covetous and Unjuſt who robbeth others, but he alſo who baſely keeps his own, without Communicating to others; who eateth his morſals alone,* as *Job* ſpeaks, *without calling the Stranger and Needy to ſhare with him.* There is no evil in Rich Mens eating the Fat, and Drinking the Sweet, providing they ſend portions to them, for whom nothing is prepared: But if this be omitted they abuſe the good Creatures of GOD committed to their Cuſtody, and are as unjuſt as that Steward, who feeds highly himſelf, but lets his Fellow Servants ſtarve. He only is a Wiſe and Faithful Steward, who is Liberal and Charitable of thoſe Goods which GOD hath given him, who *feeds the hungry, cloaths the naked, viſits the Sick; and ſuch as are in priſon,* and Adminiſters to them. And as by a Wiſe and Charitable

Charitable Diſtribution of the *Mammon* of Unrighteouſneſs, he purchaſeth to himſelf Love and a Vertuous Commendation in this World, ſo he maketh to himſelf *Friends that never die*; but who, when he removeth hence, *will recive him into their everlaſting Habitations? Luke* 16. 9. We will not inſiſt farther on this Point at preſent, becauſe we will have occaſion to Diſcourſe thereon afterwards in the *Second Part*; And therefore we ſhall now conclude with thoſe words of our Saviour, often uſed, *He that hath ears to hear let him hear*; He that is concerned let him remember and take notice of this and do in like manner, that it may be well with him, that he may eſcape the Danger of Riches, and not through them make Shipwrack of his Salvation: But notwithſtanding of theſe Impediments and Difficulties which they throw in his way, he may obtain a ſafe Arrival into that Heavenly *Canaan* which is above.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the end which Jacob *propoſed to himſelf in theſe Requeſts. His Condition here a fit Emblem to repreſent the Preſent State of Mankind; All Men conſidered as Pilgrims and Sojourners both in a Literal and Moral Senſe. The Patriarchs lived in expectation of a Future State; The certaintie of this State held forth, and ſome account thereof given. The Concluſion of this* firſt part.

THE laſt Particular to be taken notice of in this Part of *Jacob's Vow*, is the end which he propoſed to himſelf, in asking thoſe things from GOD, *viz. that he might come back to his Father's houſe in peace*; And hereby the Reaſonableneſs and Equitie of his Requeſts will farther appear; he was at this time going a *Pilgrimage*, travelling a to *Forreigne Countrey*, where he intended not to take up a conſtant Reſidence, whatever he might meet with: he reſolved only to *Sojourne* for ſome time, and then to return to his Father's houſe, the place of his Birth and Edu-

cation. He Designed to take up his rest and settled Abode, no other where then his Father's house, and this *Land of Promise* he preferred to Kingdoms, and the best Inheritance else-where. And therefore it was that he now asked no more then what was Suitable, and Necessarie to his Present State, and Condition of a Pilgrim, and Traveller.

The present Condition of this *Patriarch*, is a fit and proper Emblème to hold forth the Nature and Qualitie of Man's Life, while in this World; for what *Jacob* was at this time, all Men may be said to be, during their abode upon Earth. This same *Jacob* when he appeared before *Pharaoh* in Egypt, calls his whole Life *a Pilgrimage*, without respecting this particular Journey which he made to *Mesopotamia*; And he sayes the same of the Life of his Fathers, *The dayes*, saith he, *of the years of my Pilgrimage, are an hundred and thirty years; few, and evil have the dayes of the years of my life been, And have not attained unto the dayes of the years of the life of my Fathers, in the dayes of their Pilgrimage*; Gen. 47. 9. *David* also saith the same; Psal. 39. 12. *I am a stranger with thee, and a Sojourner as all my Fathers were*; And again, he saith plainly, *I am a stranger*

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in the earth, Psal. 119. 19. And indeed all men while they are upon Earth, are to be considered only as Strangers and Sojourners. Our very Life here is nothing else but a Pilgrimage, and that both in a Literal and Moral Sense. It holds even for the most part true Literally, for there is no settled Condition here; like Travellers we are still in a continuall motion, flitting up and down; what do we else but traverse the World, and go from one place to another? He is truely a singular person who hath never been from his Mothers knee, nor seen any other place then that of his Birth, nor conversed with any other Men then his particular Friends and Relations, and those he was Born and Bred amongst. The *Secret Providence* of GOD, the pursuing our Callings, the desire of a Livelyhood and Subsistance, the seeking our greater Peace and Security, drive us with *Jacob* from our *Father's house*. We are hereby often constrained to a wandring Course of Life, which exposes us also to Wind and Weather, and all the Incommodities which Travellers meet with: Men cannot almost by any Means, or the greatest Foresight, secure to themselves a fixed Station in this World, but are either by their choice willingly, or through necessity chang-

ing their Habitations and Imployments. When we think our ſelves moſt ſecure, and are building to our ſelves Houſes and Tabernacles of Reſidence, hoping that here we ſhall fix and ſettle, behold, preſently ſome thing or other occurs which defeats our Deſign, and alters our Purpoſe, and conſtrains us to make Tryal of ſome State and Condition we little thought upon. And thus all Men almoſt from their own Experience, may ſay, *that their Life and Condition here is like that of a Traveller and Pilgrime.*

But however true it hold in a *Literal ſenſe*, it is alwayes *Morally true*, that Man while upon Earth is but a *Sojourner* and *Stranger* whatever be his Lot and Portion. For *firſt*, GOD hath not intended us a *Sure* and *Laſting Abode* here, he hath reſolved not to ſuffer us to make any long or conſiderable ſtay on the Earth, he deſigns only that we ſhould take a ſhort view of things, take a turn or two and then remove hence. Man's Life here is but of *few dayes*, even thoſe who attain to the greateſt number of years, their life if compared to *Eternity*, is but a *ſpan-long*; and ſeeing that thus we have but ſo ſhort and ſo uncertain Poſſeſſion of this World, our ſtay therein cannot

not be counted other, then *a Sojourning*. It cannot be ſaid properly that we *dwell here*, but only that we *lodge*; For we are not *true Inhabitants*, but only *way-faring Men*, who take a Nights Lodging and afterwards are gone. We can call no place here our *Home*, we never go *Home* till we deſcend into the Grave, and paſs over into the other World; that is our *Home*, becauſe there is no changing of it, nor flitting from it.

Secondly, As we are to account our ſelves *Sojourners*, becauſe our Life is ſhort, ſo *Strangers*, becauſe of the want of an agreeable Habitation. All Creatures have a proper Element, whither alſo their Natural Propenſitie inclines them; that is the Proper and Natural Element of any Beeing which is ſuitable to its Nature and Quality, and where it finds Reſt and Eaſe; but on the contrary, that is Improper and Unnatural which agrees not with its Diſpoſition, and where it lives with Difficultie, and in much pain. Thus the Air is an improper Element for Fiſhes, as the Water for Fowls, and Terreſtrial Creatures; and conſequently this World is not the proper place and habitation of Spirits, and Rational Beings: And therefore alſo not of Men, ſeeing we are of this Order by our *better part*. The

Creatures

Creatures to be met with here below, are not capable of Converſe with us; and all the Delights and Enjoyments here can only gratifie the Body, and be profitable for cheating thoſe *frail Tabernacles we carry about with us*; But 'tis little ſervice they can do the *Soul*, and therefore however proper theſe *lower Regions* may be for Bodies, yet certainly our Souls ſoar higher, and aſpire after a Happineſs beyond what is to be found here. Wherefore whiles we are upon Earth, we may be truely called *Exiles*, and ſaid to ſuffer *Baniſhment*, for Heaven only is our *Native Soyle*, it is in *yonder Regions* above that we can only expect to find a *ſuitable Habitation* and *abode*. The very Heathens had this Sentiment, they accounted their Stay here a *perfect baniſhment*, and eſteemed the Body the Priſon, which detained the Soul from its *Native Country*. So Anaxagoras *being asked, whither he had any Care or Concernments for his Country, becauſe he troubled not himſelf with the* Publick Affairs *and* Tranſactions. His anſwer was, *GOD forbid that it ſhould be otherwiſe, indeed my mind is greatly towards my Country, pointing with his finger to Heaven.* That is a Man's *Home* where his Friends and Relations live, where his Wealth and Eſtate, and the Poſſeſſions wherein his Happineſs lyes

lyes are reserved, & where his Heart and Affections are placed; And so Heaven is and should be only our *Home*. Thither should we aim, for our Souls are descended thence, there GOD *our Father* liveth, and JESUS CHRIST our *elder Brother*; and *Angels* and *Seraphims*, and the *Spirits of just Men made perfect*; our Friends and Companions, and Fellow-Citizens; and there be the Treasures of our Happiness: That Good which our Souls crave and seek after is shut up there, and no where else. This World affords no perfect Contentment, or true solid Happiness: All we can expect here is some little Refreshing to keep us from Fainting and Languishing. This World is an *Inne*, too narrow and scanty for to give *Satisfactorie ease* and *fulnesse*; this is only to be looked for when we come to our *Fathers house*, *where there are many Mansions*, and all Richly and well Furnished; *In his Presence, there is fulness of joy, and at his Right Hand there are Rivers of Pleasures for evermore*; *Psal.* 16. 11.

This *Earthly Canaan* which was here promised to *Jacob*, was a type of Heaven, and given as a Pledge thereof: It is not to be doubted, but that the *Patriarch* had a prospect beyond the Land wherein he was, though it was the pleasantest upon Earth, he had already

already taſted theſe Delights which *Canaan* upon Earth afforded: and albeit they were good enough of their kind, yet he could not but be ſenſible, that they were far ſhort of of ſatisfying the Appetite of the *Soul*: And that therefore there was ſomething to be deſired, more then what is to be found even in the beſt Countrey here. *Jacob* had certainly the beſt and moſt *vertuous Education* of any in the World, he was preſerved from *Vice* and *Immorality*, which render *Men brutiſh*, and ſo enfeeble their Minds, that they can Dream of nothing but what ſavours of the Fleſh; he was early taught all Natural Wiſdom and Knowledge, and inſtructed alſo in things which *Natural light* could not reach to: And therefore he certainly knew, and was perſawded that there was *ſomething within him* beſides *Fleſh and Bones*, even a *Divine Soul* capable of, and deſigned for a more *noble kind of Life*, then what Man enjoyes at preſent: Becauſe the Promiſes made to the *Patriarchs* expreſſed in *Scripture* are *Temporal*, we muſt not from thence conclude, that they had no other, *Spiritual* & *Eternal Bleſſings* were Vailed under theſe, and might perhaps alſo be Promiſed a part, though they be not particularly mentioned; No doubt more was Revealed to them then what

what we have an account of, but what is *written was only neceſſarie to be known to us for the pointing out of the Meſſias.* It is very unreaſonable to think, that they who were ſo Dearly Beloved of GOD, Honoured with many Particular Revelations, and whoſe Wiſdom and Vertue was more then Ordinary, I ſay it is unreaſonable to think that they were left ignorant of a *future ſtate.* Such a thought is injurious to the Love of GOD, and alſo inconſiſtent with that Character they deſerve; as queſtionleſs they had a Curioſity to know, whither there was *another better life* hereafter. So GOD would not refuſe to ſatisfie the ſame, it being very Laudable and very Neceſſary for the directing of their Life and compoſing their minds in Peace, It is but ſmall Comfort and Satisfaction, the *Patriarchs* can be ſuppoſed to have had, in the Promiſes that were made them, if we take away the Hopes and Expectation of another Life: For the Promiſes did more concern their Poſterity then themſelves; And as for the Favours preſently conferred, the pleaſure thereof could not but be very much marred with the thoughts of their Death. Nay, the more Good they Enjoyed, the more they would be Troubled, when they reflected upon their Mortality; And they

could not but frequently reflect thereon, seeing every where Instances thereof are to be met with. Death damps a Man's Spirit, and Imbitters his Life; The greater matter of Contentment one hath at present, the greater will be his Disquiet when he thinks he will die: Unless he believe his death will be followed with a long and better Life. It is the Wretched and Miserable, who desire death, or think upon it without Regrate: Others cannot think upon it without sadness, if they have not the Comfort which ariseth from the Assurance of after Happiness. *O death*, saith the Son of *Sirach*, *how bitter is the Remembrance of thee to a Man that liveth at rest in his Possessions, And to the Man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath Prosperity in all things, Yea, unto him that is yet able to receive Meat*; *Eccles.* 41: 1, 2. If then the *Patriarchs* had been ignorant of a Future State, and without the Hopes of it, their Life would have been very Miserable; And the Singular Blessings GOD bestowed on them, would have but tended to increase their misery. But that another better State was made known to them, and that they lived in the expectation of it, is plainly intimat to us by St. *Paul Heb.* 11. 13. &c where he saith, *these all died in Faith, not having*

ing received the Promiſes, *but having ſeen them a far off, and were perſwaded of them, and Embraced them, and Confeſſed that they were Strangers and* Pilgrims *on the Earth, for they that ſay ſuch things, Declare plainly that they ſeek a Countrey; And truly if they had been mindful of that Countrey from whence they came out, they might have had Opportunity to have returned but now they deſire a better Countrey, that is an Heavenly. Therefore GOD is not aſhamed to be called their GOD, for He hath prepared for them a City.* And a little before he tells us particularlie of *Abraham* that he *looked for a City which hath foundations, whoſe Maker and Builder is GOD.* Which he could not look for in this World, and therefore certainly he expected it in that which is to come.

If we break off the Fetters of Luſts, and Diſintangle our ſelves from Carnal and Worldly intereſts, and allow our Souls but any meaſure of Rational Wiſdom; As then our *Deſires* would ſoon take Wing and flee above Sublunarie Enjoyments, ſo our *Minds* would be eaſily inclined to believe another better State to ſucceed this: For without this Suppoſition, *Man* is the ſtrangeſt and moſt Puzling *Phenomena*, the moſt Unaccountable thing in Nature, a *Beeing* patcht up of Irregularities & Contradictions: For by

Nature he is capable of Immortality, and yet as to his Duration but an *Ephemera*, of ſo ſhort a Life, that he bends to die almoſt as ſoon as he begins to live; He is capable of the higheſt Perfection, and fitted for the Nobleſt Imployments, and yet if we do not ſuppoſe *another Life*, he hath nothing elſe to do, except to eat and drink, and ſerve the mean ends of an *Animal Life*; which the *brute Beaſts* attain to with much leſs toil and trouble. Thus *He* who is the Chiefeſt of all the Creatures we ſee, and ſeems to be deſign'd *Lord* of them, would be in the worſt Condition of any; Becauſe never attaining the End and Perfection his Nature is capable of, neither receiving the Satisfaction of his moſt Reaſonable, which is the moſt Manlike deſires. If there were not an after-State preferrable to this, *Man* would not be the Ornament of the *Creation*, but rather its Deformity; And would afford ſome ground of Impeaching the *Divine Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs*, as if either the Contrivance had been marr'd, or the Deſign of Creating him cruel, in that he is indued with Capacities never to be Perfected, and with Deſires and Appetites which cannot receive Satisfaction. Hence it would follow that GOD is kinder to the Beaſts then to Man;

And

And that he is the happieſt Man who leaſt uſeth his Reaſon and Underſtanding, that is, that layeth aſide that which maketh him Man, and endeavours to be as the Beaſts who periſh. Then they ſhould be in the worſt caſe, of all others the moſt Miſerable who Love and Fear and Serve GOD moſt, and are moſt Carefull to Pleaſe Him. Theſe and a great many moe Abſurdities would follow the Negation of a *Future State*, which cannot be admitted, unleſs we deny a *Providence* altogether, and aſcribe all things to *blind Chance*. And indeed the *Immortalitie of our Souls* ſeems to follow ſo neceſſarly from a belief of a *Deitie*, that there have been very few who doubted of that, without calling this in Queſtion too.

But though theſe things may incline us to the belief of a *Future happy State*, yet they do not certainly aſſure us thereof; They are great and ſtrong *Preſumptions* indeed, but no certain *Demonſtrations*: Becauſe it might be alledged that theſe Abſurdities are rather the Conſequence of our Ignorance, which cannot underſtand better, then of that ſuppoſed ſtate of Man; And that we cannot conclude any thing to be, becauſe that otherwayes we are unable to Salve and Vindicat the Wiſdom of GOD: For how do we know

know what is Conſiſtant or Inconſiſtant with *Infinite Wiſdom?* Many things may be agreeable thereto which we cannot find out. The undoubted certainty therefore of an *after happy State*, can only be drawn from the *Goſpel of JESUS CHRIST*; He *hath brought Life and Immortality to Light*, 2 *Tim.* 1: 10. He hath put this matter clearly out of doubt, ſo that it needs no longer be Diſputed as an uncertain *Probleme*. *JESUS CHRIST* by his plain Aſſertions, and expreſs Promiſes, and his own Reſurrection, hath Demonſtrate to the World that there is another Life to ſucceed this: So that nothing but Perverſneſs and Obſtinacy can make Men call it in Queſtion. He that will not be Convinced with this Evidence which the *Goſpel* giveth, is proofe againſt all Evidence, and it is impoſſible to Convince him; *He who will not believe Moſes* and the *Prophets*, *CHRIST* and the *Apoſtles*, *will not believe though* One *ſhould riſe from the dead.*

And as it is the *Goſpel* which doth only aſcertain us of a *Future ſtate*, ſo it is from it only that we may learn any true account of the nature and qualities thereof. This is a thing not ſo eaſie to be gueſſed at as the other. If any ſhould offer to deſcribe the

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State of a Countrey which they had never ſeen, neither hath any true *Idea* of, this deſcription would be but bad and far from exactneſs: Now Heaven doth infinitlie tranſcend the beſt ſtate in this World, and is of a quite different nature, ſo that our conceptions could not reach it, unleſs it were revealed. The Heathens who had not this true light to direct them, entertained wild and extravagant fancies about the nature of that Life which is to ſucceed this: But yet they were not ſo groſs and abſurd as *Mahomet*, who ſet aſide the light of the *Goſpel*, and followed his own dreams, which have ſuggeſted an odd kind of *Paradiſe*, and ſuch *Monſtruous Pleaſures* there, as can reliſh with none but beaſtlie and brutiſh Perſons: for others certainly cannot but deſpiſe them, and be ſo far from counting ſuch enjoyments of happineſs, that they will certainly reckon it the greateſt miſery to be tyed to them eternally. Some of that *Falſe Prophets followers*, are ſo aſhamed of this account he gives of Mens happineſs in the other World, that they ſtudy to put a fair conſtruction thereupon, by interpreting the ſame allegorically: But though this ſhould be admitted, it will not excuſe; for ſuch Similitudes ſhould have been ſhun-

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ed, which can only ſerve to beget in Mens minds baſe and low thoughts of that *Bleſſed Life*, and which are ſo far from engaging men to purifie themſelves here in order to it; that they rather foſter an perſwaſion, that none are fitted and diſpoſed for it, but impure and unclean perſons; ſeeing it is repreſented by the exerciſe of impurities and the groſſeſt ſenſualities. It is true, the *Goſpel* makes uſe of Earthly compariſons, in holding forth the *Joyes and excellency of Heaven*; Becauſe otherwayes it is impoſſible to convey to our minds any apprehenſion thereof: for as Children muſt be taught in Childiſh terms, ſo men cannot be inſtructed in things ſo ſublime, and ſo far above the reach of their underſtandings, but by uſing expreſions and Similitudes familiar to them though not ſo juſt and adequat in themſelves. But though the Scripture when it ſpeaks of Heaven, adapts it ſelf to the weakneſs of our apprehenſions, yet at the ſame time it guards ſufficiently againſt all low and ſordid thoughts: for both the *Metaphors* uſed are choiſe and cleanlie, and the manner of handling them ſuch, as gives us to Underſtand, that we are not to take them Literally. The glory of the other Life it ſet forth by *Crowns*, and *Scepters*, and *Banquet-*

queting's and *Rivers of Pleaſures*; But we are allo abundantly cautioned againſt the expectation of carnal gratifications; for theſe cannot be look'd for there, where the ſtate of things makes them no wayes deſirable, but altogether unneceſſarie; for then men live not an *Animal Life*, but a life *Sublimely Spiritual*.

All the circumſtances and particularities of the *Life to come* are not revealed, neither are we yet capable to know them. At preſent our faculties are not fitted to diſcern the pleaſures and enjoyments above; even though they were laid out before us, we could no more take them up then a blind Man colours, or the Infant in the Womb, the Chearfulneſs of this lightſome World, or a Child the ſtrong contents of riper Age. When *St paul* was caught up into *Paradiſe* he was ſo tranſported beſides himſelf, that he knew not well *whither he was in the body, or out of the body*; And what he ſaw and heard there, he tells us is *unſpeakable, and not poſſible to be uttered*; 2 Cor. 12. 4. Untill the temper and Diſpoſition both of body and mind be changed and Spiritualized, we can neither enjoy that Life above, nor yet fully underſtand the Pleaſures and ſatisfactions thereof.

But that all possible Felicity, will both be then bestowed, and there also enjoyed, is not only expresly promised, but this we may very well conclude from what is revealed. For *first*, that State above, hath nothing troublesome or uneasie in it. It is not like this World lyable to rough Weather, severe Storms, or excessive heats, which occasion fainting; nor doth there ever fall out any sad disaster or calamitie to discompose the minds of the Inhabitants. There be some Mountains, as *Tenariff*, which surmount the Clouds, and it is said the Air about the top of them is alwayes so calm, that the smallest Sand or Dust will remain unblown away, and in the same manner it was first laid down, which may be no unfitt Emblem of the Tranquillitie of Heaven: It is the Fate only of these *Sublunarie Countreys*, to be infested with Fogs and Mists, with Wind and Rain; such is the constitution of this World, that the pleasures here are marr'd and allay'd, by some or other disgustfull inconvenience which always attend them: but the *Heavenly Regions* are ever Clear and Serene, there is a perpetuall Calm there, and a constant Freedom from all sort of Disturbances. They, who are there, saith *St. John*, *shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more,*

more, neither ſhall the Sun light on them, nor any heat: For the Lamb which is in the midſt of the Throne, ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto Living fountains of Waters, and GOD ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there ſhall be no more death; neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain, for the former things are paſſed away, Rev. 7. 17. 21. 4.

Secondly not only what Diſquiets our preſent Life, and holds us in continuall Vexation, is for ever thruſt out of Heaven: but alſo the Beautie and Ornaments of this World, are laid aſide as Impertections and Unneceſſarie things; and what is *infinitlie more glorious*, take places in ſtead of them. The *Sun* is the Beautie of this *lower World*, and how diſconſolat would our Condition be without the light thereof. But ſo glorious is the *State above*, and ſo excellent, that the *Sun* it ſelf, and its Light would be but a Blemiſh *there*: for *St: John* tells us, *that the Heavenly Jeruſalem had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to ſhine in it, for the Glory of GOD did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*; and again, *there ſhal be no night there, and they need no candel, neither light of the Sun: for the LORD GOD giveth them light*, Rev. 21. 23. and 22. 5. All Kings and

Princes, Study to have their Courts anſwerable to their Magnificence and Dignitie; The Palaces of Kings are alwayes Seated in the beſt part of their Kingdoms, and thither are brought the Chief delights which their Countreys can afford: How Glorious and Magnificent then muſt Heaven be, which is the Palace of the great King, the Peculiar habitation of GOD himſelf? if he hath ſo Beautified this World, and Repleniſhed it with ſuch variety, when it is only the *lower apartment of beaſts*; or at the beſt but a *tranſient quarter* for Man, What do we think will that be, and how ſumptuouſly Enriched, which he hath deſign'd to be his own everlaſting abode, and the Habitation of thoſe peculiar ones whom he hath ſet his love upon, and with whom he hath determined to remain for ever? There certainly GOD will diſplay Himſelf, and His Glory, and will give *Admirable Manifeſtations* of his Wiſdom; Power Goodneſs, and other Perfections; beyond what *either eye hath ſeen, or eare heard, or what can enter into the heart of Man.*

Thirdly, The *excellent company* which are in Heaven is no ſmall Addition to the Happineſs thereof; They are Perſons far from Malice and Envy, from intertaining Suſpicions

picions and Animoſities, or from being ready to fall out in jars and conteſts: But as they are Enriched with the beſt Endowments, ſo they are Acted with the largeſt Charity and Good-will; loving each other intirely, and intertaining one another with all the Indearing expreſſions of Friendſhip. Of all pleaſures, Friendſhip and the ſociety of Excellent Perſons is the greateſt; it affects the mind moſt, and fills the Heart with the greateſt Meaſure of Joy and Gladneſs: what Delight and Satisfaction then, may be expected in the Society of *Angels* and *Arch-Angels*, *Cherubims* and *Seraphims*, and *the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*?

But *fourthly*, in the *other life* we ſhall find our ſelves, not only in a far better State as to Externals but ſhall alſo feel great and Glorious Changes in our ſelves. For *firſt*, we ſhall not be tyed to the neceſſity, of Eating and Drinking and Sleeping, *in which mean exerciſes, the one half of our time is conſumed*; there we ſhall not be cloged and fettered to a crazy, infirm, and ſickly Body as now, *for then this Corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal, Immortality. And CHRIST JESUS ſhall change this vile Body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his Glorious Body, according to the working whereby He is able to ſubdue all things*

things to himself; 1 *Cor.* 15. *Phil.* 3. 21. There ſhall be a vaſt Change in the Frame and Conſtitution of our Body: For there ſhall be given to it, Glory and Power, and Splendor, and ſome other Subtile and Excellent Qualities, ſo far above the *common Nature* of Bodies, that the *Apoſtle* thought fit to term it a *Spiritual Body*. *Secondly*, As ſuch Glorious Changes are to be wrought upon our Bodies, ſo the like ſhall be done to our Souls; the Body is thus changed into the better, becauſe the Soul is alſo made more perfect: theſe excellent Endowments are beſtowed upon the Body, becauſe the Perfection and Dignity to which the Soul is now raiſed, require that it ſhould be ſolodged; For being our inward Faculties are much better then Formerly, the outward Organs and Inſtruments of Action ſhould be better too. Now our Souls ſhall not only be delivered from Ignorance and Errour, and all the Diſorders which ſin hath involv'd them into, but ſhall alſo have all their Faculties rectified, and elevat to the outmoſt hight of Perfection, of which Creatures are capable. Truth ſhall not then be vail'd with Abſurdity, nor ſhall we be oblidged to ſeek the Knowledge thereof; by ſuch tedious and uncertain inquiries as now we are neceſſitate

neceſſitate to: But ſhall be endowed with all deſirable Wiſdom; *Now* ſayes the *Apoſtle*, *We ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then ſhall I know as alſo I am known*; 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. And to make our Souls compleatly perfect, there ſhall be added unſpotted Puritie and Holineſs, and a participation of the *Divine Nature*. *Beloved*, ſaith St. *John*, *now are we the Sons of GOD; and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but we know that when He ſhall appear we ſhall be like Him, for we ſhall ſee Him as He is*, 1 *John* 3. 2. The *Image of GOD*, ſhall be renewed upon our Souls, and that more clearly and brighty then it was at our *firſt Creation*; the *Divine Perfections* ſhall be tranſcribed upon us, and thereby we ſhall be brought into a near and inconceivable Union with GOD. And now ſeeing this doth appear, what needs more? Here we may well ſtay our Thoughts, for indeed there is no climbing higher; GOD is Perfection it ſelf, and the Fountain of all Happineſs, he therefore muſt needs be moſt Happy, who is like GOD and United to him. It is ſimply impoſſible to conceive greater Happineſs and Satisfaction, then this Enjoyment of GOD and likeneſs to him. *David* doubted not of receiving Satisfaction from this, when he ſaid, *As for me I will be-*

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bold thy Face in righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs; Pſal. 17. 15.

This is *true Felicity*, and ſhould be aſpired after, 'tis a ſhame for any Man to ſit down lower, or to content himſelf with leſs Degrees of Happineſs, ſeeing GOD is willing to beſtow this upon him. The obtaining *Heaven* and *Eternal Life* ſhould be our main Project, and the great Deſign we ſhould be alwayes dryving on, nothing ſhould divert us from this; but all our Endeavours ſhould be to further it on: And our Prayers to GOD ſhould be chiefly, that he would be pleaſed to *favour this aim of ours, and not ſuffer us to miſcarry.* Some whom Worldly Love and Carnal Affections have ſeized and enſlaved, may with *Reuben* and *Gad* wiſh to have *their Tabernacles ſet up this ſide Jordan:* And providing they could get their Portion in this Life, would never ſeek after the *Land of Promiſe:* But ſuch certainly Act contrary to Reaſon, and unbecoming the Dignity of their Natures, They muſt put off the *Man* very much who intend no higher Pleaſures then what are Bodily, and ariſe from the Enjoyment of Earthly things; Which though gluted to the full, can never ſatisfie the Soul. As all Mens Experience do teſtifie. *As Noahs Dove found*

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no reſt untill ſhe returned to the Ark; So neither can the Soul of Man have any ſolide content until it aſcend into *the holy hill of GOD*; and reſt in the boſom of him from whom it had its being.

And as Man's *true Felicity* lyes not in this, but in the other World, ſo the chief Satisfaction which we can have at preſent, flowes from the ſure and well grounded Hopes of that after Happineſs; even as the greateſt content of a Merchant while he is Trafficking abroad, is in the Expectation of the Gain he will make when he comes home: And as the chiefeſt delight of an Heir while he is *Minor*, is in his hopes of ſucceeding to his Father's Honour and Fortune when he arrives at full Age. Here we are as it were, in the Quality and Condition of *Minors*, and therefore have no Reaſon to grudge though we be not put actually in the Poſſeſſion of full Happineſs. We may be very well ſatisfied for the preſent, that the ſame is ſurely reſerved to us, and waiting upon us till that we be ripe for it; *Bleſſed be the GOD and Father of our Lord* JESUS CHRIST, *which according to his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of* JESUS CHRIST *from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not*

away, reserved in Heaven for us; 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

The Design of this present *Treatise* is to direct to *true Felicity*, which as it is of great Importance to be known; so we judge we have made some plain Proposals, which may sufficiently instruct those who are desirous to know, if they be also unbyassed. The sum of all this is, that *true Happiness* consists in the Enjoyments of GOD; for in him only is to be found what may satisfie all our Desires: All the Creatures are but *finite things*, and consequently their use is Limited and Restrained to some few Particulars; they can neither remedy all evils, nor procure every thing Good and Desirable. The *Sun* gives Light, but doth not nourish; Meat nourisheth, but doth not Warm; Cloaths they warm us, but cannot recover our Health; Physick may do that, but cannot protect us from Dangers; and therefore we should be little the better, for the Enjoyment of one or a few of these *Temporary Goods*, unless we had all: and even though all were enjoyed, our Souls would crave some Satisfaction beyond what they could afford. The way to be Happy then, is not to seek to amass Wealth and Honour, and the other things of this World: the best and surest way is to seek GOD

GOD and make Him our Friend, for in him we ſhall find whatſoever is neceſſary, He is *infinite in himſelf*, and the *inexhauſtable fountain* of all Good, and there is in him what may ſerve all our neceſſities, and ſatisfie our Deſires. And as he is our *Summum bonum*, our *Chief good*; ſo he is moſt readie and willing to Communicat himſelf to us: If we Labour to Pleaſe Him, and to approve our ſelves to him, he will befriend us as much as is requiſite to our *preſent Condition* here, and hereafter when we are rendred capable thereof, he will Bleſs us with the full Enjoyment of Himſelf, whereby we ſhall be poſſeſſed of the moſt *Perfect Felicity*.

Perfect Felicity is not to be met with in this World, in vain do men look for it, it is reſerved till the *next Life:* All the Happineſs which here we can enjoy, conſiſts in the hope of that *perfect Happineſs which is to come*, and in having fair Opportunities to ſecure it, together with the competent Supplie of our *preſent bodily neceſſities*. He then who would be truly Happy, let him make GOD and Heaven his great aim; for this will certainly lead to that Compleat and unſpeakable Felicity of the other World; And in the mean time will procure him

all the Satisfaction desirable in this. If we were so wise as to propose this to our selves, our Life would not be so uneasie and troublesome as ordinarly it is: but we should enjoy a great deal of Tranquillity and Peace. For hereby we should be preserved from *immoderat cares, discontentedness, and impatience*, which so much disturb our Minds, and are the only hinderances of our *present Felicity. First*, he who placeth his Happiness in GOD, and sincerely pursueth *Eternal Life*, needs not vex himself with *cares about the things of this Life:* but may *cast all his care upon GOD, who will undoubtedly sustain him;* and who hath promised, that *if we seek first the Kingdom of GOD, and his righteousness, all these things shall be added unto us.* Matth. 6. 33. *Secondly*, this will bring our Minds to be contented, with Moderat and Competent Supplies, by taking off our thoughts from Wealth and Greatness and Honour, &c. *Having food and Raiment*, saith the *Apostle*, *let us be therewith content:* And good reason, seing it is all that Travellers stand in need of. All that is requisite to one in a Journey, is his *Viaticum*, convenient Dyet, Cloathing, and Lodging, and a safe and Peaceable Passage; Other things would but retard the Journey,

ney, and render it leſs eaſie and ſafe. *Thirdly*, this would free us from impatience the laſt Enemy of our Peace, and would make us bear trouble and Receive Diſaſters with a Serene compoſed Spirit; Conſidering that *our time here is but ſhort*, and ſoon at an end, and that when we come Home to our Father's houſe, we ſhall have all things to our Mind, and ſhall ſoon be made to forget our Toil and Travel. No Wiſe Man who ſets out upon a Journey will fret and be dejected becauſe the Weather is not alwayes Fair, and the way ſmooth, and that he finds not every where as good Accomodation, as at Home. While Men are Travellers in forreign Countreys, they muſt reſolve upon Hardſhips and inconveniencies: And we have this great encouragement, to Patience and Cheerfulneſs even in the midſt of Troubles, that no Trouble or Calamitie can defeat our Deſigns, if we be but ſtedfaſt to them; If we keep our Hearts fixt upon GOD, and conſtant to the proſecution of Eternal Life, we ſhall certainly arrive there, what ever weather it blow, and whatever Oppoſition we meet with. It is impoſſible for either Men or Devils, *to ſeparate us from GOD*, or to keep us out of Heaven, if we continue ſincere

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in our Love, and Endeavours.

And now that we may draw to a Concluſion, as what hath been ſaid ſheweth where our *true Felicity lyes*, So it diſcovereth the Wretched Folly of the greateſt part of Mankind; Who though they all deſire Happineſs, yet miſs it: Becauſe they ſeek it not where it is, but place the ſame in ſome vain empty Enjoyments. It is ſad, to behold how Wild and Extravagant *Men* are in their Aims and Propoſals, how hotly they purſue Toyes and Trifles and very means Things? and in the mean time, how careleſs they are of what they ſhould moſt mind, *viz. GOD* and their *eternal Intereſt*. All are ſenſible that they *cannot live here for ever*; Its evident and viſible unto them, that *Nill they*, *Will they*, they muſt be gone out of this World: And yet very few, are ſo wiſe as to endeavour that it may be well with them, when they remove hence. Their Thoughts for the moſt part are about the preſent World, and the things thereof, as if they were never to leave them; Certainly though they could brook them alwayes, they could not intend them more earneſtly, or be more buſie about them. Some being dazled with the *S*plendour and Gliſtering of Riches, labour for them with

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all their Might, others graſp at Power and Command, as if that were ſome Fine or Happy thing; ſome ſtudy to be accounted wiſe and and Learned, ſome would raiſe themſelves a Name, And deſire to be the talk and Diſcourſe of the World, every one has his Different aim and deſign which he followeth, *trahit ſua quemque voluptas*; And that they may compaſs theſe their ſeveral Aims, They are ſtill holding themſelves and others in continuall Vexation and Trouble, and do fill the World full of Jarres and Conteſts. Now this behaviour of of Men is moſt Unreaſonable and Unaccountable, ſeing our Dayes are ſo few and that we are of ſo ſhort continuance in this World; theſe things might be ſomewhat excuſable if we were to live here for ever; but ſeing that cannot be, ſeing by the *Eternal Decree* of GOD, we are only appointed to Lodge here for a ſhort time, how vain and fooliſh is it to make a great dale adoe about that which is neither neceſſary to our Preſent Peace and Comfort, nor yet to our Future Happineſs; It is juſt as if a Traveller coming to an Inne, where he were to ſtay but for a Night, and finding it but Poor and Mean and ill Accommodat, ſhould preſently ſend for Maſons, Carpenters and Painters,

Painters to repair and beautifie it: Or as one upon his Arrival to any great City, ſhould preſently aſpire to the higheſt Dignity and Preferment in it: And raiſe Stirs and Factions for that end, when he knew aſſuredly that he muſt leave it the next day. If by ſuch Impertinencies Men did only diſturb their Preſent Peace and Quiet, the matter were yet the leſs, though even here their Loſs would exceed their Gain, ſuppoſe they ſhould obtain their Deſire? But alas the great concerns of another World are often put in hazard thereby! Their Souls for the moſt part periſh in theſe Attempts, and by their Eagerneſſe to have thoſe vain and ſhort Enjoyments of this *preſent Life*, they often keep themſelves from receiving the Satisfactory and *Eternal poſſeſſions above.* O *that men were wiſe, O that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their Latter end*! O that they were ſo Wiſe, and Happy, as not to enterpriſe or engage themſelves into any Purſute: untill they firſt Weighed and Examined the importance thereof, whither the Fruit and Event would recompenſe the Pains and Labour! O that they would but put that Queſtion often home to themſelves, *What is a man profited if he ſhould gain the*

the whole World, and loſs his own Soul? And what will a man give in exchange for his Soul? Matth. 16. 26. What a Madneſs and Unexcuſeable Folly is it to be much concerned for a *Tranſitory Life*, and little for *Eternity*? To take much thought for things which periſh, and which we muſt ſhortly leave, and to mind little or to ſeek with indifferency that which *endureth for ever*? *Here* ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *we have no continuing City, but we ſeek one to come*; *Heb.* 13. 14. Our Heads and our Hearts, ſhould be ſtill towards *Heaven*, the recovery of that Countrey above, for which we were firſt deſigned, and to which we Naturally belong; this I ſay, ſhould be our chief Aim and main Project; All other things in compariſon to this are but idle Fancies, and building Caſtles in the Air; He that doth not ſo live as that he may be received into Glory when he dies, he hath lived to very little purpoſe; He deſerves the *Tomb* and *Epitaph* of that Luxurious and Uſeleſs Emperour *Sardanapalus*, in which there was drawn two Fingers, and ſounding one upon another with theſe words, *NON TANTI EST*, that is, *all is not worth the while*. Men are ſeldom wiſe till it be out of time, but ſure if they did but conſult their *own Experience*, they ſhold be more ſen-

ſible of the Folly of many of their Deſigns and Enterprifes; And if we did aſk the greateſt Warriour and Conquerour in the World, he that had been the moſt ſucceſſfull in his Aims to be Rich, and Great, and Honourable, when he were departing hence, what pleaſure or profit he received thereby? He would no doubt give us *Solomon's* Verdict, *All is vanity and vexation of Spirit*, the Proſecution of them produceth Vexation, the Enjoyment proveth Vanity, and the Reflection makes them *triſtes ineptiæ*, ſoure and ſad trifles, and they carry little away with them, beſides the Memory of being ſo ill imployed.

What haſt thou by thy happieſt project gain'd,
But thou repent'ſt thy pains, and wiſh obtain'd.

This *Saladine* that great *Sultan of Egypt*, loudly proclaimed to the World, when he diſcharged all *Funerall Solemnities*, and ordered only a *Black ſhirt*, in which when dead he was to be wrapt, to be carried through the Camp on a Lance, and one to cry before it, *This is all which Saladine the Emperour receives of his great Wealth, and vaſt Empire.* Which *Bocarius* hath put into this diſtich;

Vixi

Vixi Divitijs regno tumidusque trophæis,
Sed pannum hen nigrum nil nisi morte tuli.

With Riches, Power, and Trophees I did swell,
Now a Black-Shirt doth only with me dwell.

Death is a convincing proof of the Vanitie of all Worldly things, it shews to how little purpose it is to Labour and contend so earnestly for them; for when that hour comes, they must be all thrown away, the use of them ceaseth. *When a man dieth*, saith the *Psalmist*, *he shall carry nothing away, his Glory shall not descend after him*; Psal: 49: 17: And though it should, yet in the other World Men do not take place as in this, according to their Birth, Wealth and Grandeur, 'tis Vertue only and True Holiness, which makes a Man's way there. *In the morning when they awake, it is the Upright only which shall have dominion*; And therefore let Men reckon when they will, he is the most Happy who hath enjoyed the greatest Quietness and Peace, tho it should not be much attended with outward Pomp and Grandeur; And who when he is to leave this World, hath some good and well grounded Hopes of being admitted into that

bleſſed State, where he ſhall enjoy GOD, and the Society of *Angels*, and *Immortal Felicities*.

Now that we may be all thus Happy, let us henceforth take off our Eyes from viewing the Vanities of this World, let us beware of being deceived with its *gaudy allurements*: But let us ſeek and endeavour ſeriouſly, to *lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godlineſs and Honeſty*. Let us as much as in us lyes, *follow Peace with all Men*, and prevent unneceſſary and impertinent Strifes and Debates; That enjoying an outward Peace with others, we may be the more capable to maintain the inward Peace of our own Conſciences, and a true Peace with our GOD: That when *he hath ſerved himſelf of us in this World, he may thereafter receive us, to the enjoyment of himſelf, and of his endleſs Glory*.

Seneca Thyeſt *Act.* 2.

Stet quicunque volet potens
Aulæ culmine lubrico:
Me dulcis ſaturet quies;
Obſcuro poſitus loco,
Leni perfruar otio;
Nullis nota Quiritibus
Ætas per tacitum fluat.
Sic cum tranſierint mei

Nullo

Nullo cum ſtrepitu dies,
Plebeius moriar ſenex,
Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur ſibi.

Let him that will aſcend the tottering Seat
Of Courtly Grandeur, and become as great
As are his mounting wiſhes; as for me,
Let ſweet repoſe, and reſt my portion be.
Give me ſome mean obſcure receſs; a Sphere
Out of the road of buſineſs, or the fear
Of falling lower, where I ſweetly may
My ſelf, and dear Retirement ſtill enjoy:
Let not my life, or name, be known unto
The Grandees of the times, toſt to and fro
By cenſures, or applauſe; but let my age
Slide gently by, not overthwart the ſtage
Of publick action; unheard, unſeen
And unconcern'd, as if I ne're had been,
And thus while I ſhall paſs my ſilent dayes
In ſhady privacy, free from the noiſe
And buſles of the World, then ſhall I
A good old innocent Plebeian dye.
Death is a meer ſurpriſe, a very ſnare,
To him that makes it his lifes greateſt care
To be a publick Pageant, known to all,
But unacquainted with himſelf, doth fall.

HALES.

The

The Character of a Happy Life.

How happy is he born and taught,
That ſerveth not anothers will?
Whoſe Armour is his honeſt thought:
And ſimple truth his outmoſt skill?

Whoſe paſſions not his maſters are,
Whoſe Soul is ſtill prepar'd for death;
Unty'd unto the World, by care
Of publick Fame, or privat Breath.

Who envies none that Chance doth raiſe,
Nor Vice hath ever underſtood;
How deepeſt wounds are giv'n by praiſe,
Nor rules of State, but rules of Good.

Who hath his life from rumours freed.
Whoſe conſcience is his ſtrong retreat.
Whoſe ſtate can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruine make oppreſſours great.

Who GOD doth late and early pray,
More of his grace, then gifts to lend:
And entertains the harmleſs day
With a religious book, or friend.

This man is freed from ſervile bands
Of hope to riſe, or fear to fall:
LORD of himſelf, though not of lands,
And having nothing; yet hath all.

The end of the firſt Part.

JACOB'S

JACOB'S VOW
OR
MAN'S FELICITY, and DUTY.

Part Second.

Chapter First.

A ſhort Review of the First Part. *The Caſe propoſed, how far it is Lawful to eye the Reward in our Reſolutions of Obedience. The Reſolution given in five Particulars, with an Application of all to* Jacob *here.*

THere are two things to be conſidered in every Vow, *viz. What is Promiſed*, and *what is deſired*, this laſt we have handled already, as to this *Particular Vow of Jacob's* here; we have in the former Diſcourſe opened up the Nature of his Requeſts and ſhewed what he ſought of GOD, and made it appear, that as he was Humble and Modeſt herein, in reſpect of GOD

GOD, ſo very Wiſe for himſelf things craved comprehending all that is Neceſſary and Requiſite to compleat ones Happineſs in this preſent World, he who is accompanied with the Favourable Preſence of GOD, who is kept and protected by the Power of the *Almighty*, and who hath Food and Raiment, that is, what is Competent and Sufficient for the ſerving his Neceſſities, and the Maintenance of the Preſent State, he hath all that is deſirable in this World; And therefore *Jacob* is a fit *Patern* to direct us how we ſhould ſteer our courſe, and what we ſhould Aim at, while in this World, and wherein the Happineſs of this *Preſent Life* doth conſiſt.

Having thus cleared and treated of the *Conditional part* of this Vow; It followes next that we conſider and ſpeak to the *Promiſſory part* thereof, that we may ſee what the *Patriarch* binds and oblidges himſelf to do to GOD, if ſo be he beſtowed and granted theſe things to him.

But firſt, We will Anſwer and Reſolve a *Queſtion* which any may readily ſtart here, and it is this, *whither it be lawfull to take in conditionall Clauſes in our Reſolutions to ſerve GOD*, or *how far we may have a reſpect to our benefit in our Purpoſes of Obedience*, for it would ſeem

ſeem that *Jacob's* ſervice here was a little *Mercenary*, that he made a formal Bargain with *God*, and that he reſolved only to ſerve him upon condition he did ſuch and ſuch things to him, for he *firſt* asks, and *then* he promiſes. For anſwer to this, we ſhall firſt conſider the Caſe in general, and then ſpeak to what *Jacob* did here in particular.

And *firſt*, you muſt know that we *owe to GOD all poſſible Service and Obedience*, even abſtracting from theſe *External Rewards* which he hath to beſtow, and which we have good ground to expect from him. Indeed no Man doth or ſhall ſerve GOD for nought, they be-lye GOD, and ſpeak falſly, who ſay, *It is in vain to ſerve Him, and what profit is there in keeping his Ordinances*; for he plentifully rewardeth ſuch as ſeek him in *ſincerity* and *truth*, and is moſt Liberal to all thoſe who come unto him: but however there are other *prior Obligations* and ſtrong *tyes* upon us to Obey and Pleaſe Him, ſo that although we had no Advantage by ſerving the *LORD*, yet we could neither Reaſonably complain of, nor decline His Service, for he is the *Author of our Life and Beeing*, we are his *Creatures and the work of his hands*; And therefore he hath juſt Right and Power to command us, and all the Service we are able to

do, is ſmall enough requital for what he hath already done to us; And he may juſtly call for it, though he ſhould add no farther Favours. It is his *own Bounty* and *Goodneſs* which makes him load us with his Benefits, there is no Obligation upon Him therefore, our Services do not, nor can they Merit any thing at GOD'S Hand, & though we ſhould ſuppoſe them never ſo exceptable or Worthy, yet GOD is alwayes aforehand with us, and we can never draw him in Arrears to us, for our very Life and Being is more then ſufficient payment for all that we are able to do.

Secondly, the chief Motive to the Service of GOD and the great Principal by which we ſhould be acted in our Obedience, is *that of love.* God himſelf, *and his glory*, ſhould be the *chief end*, which we propoſe to our ſelves, otherwiſe our Service is neither Reaſonable nor Acceptable. GOD is not like man, that he may be profited by us, *our goodneſs*, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſayeth, *extendeth not to thee*; *Pſal.* 16. 2. And how little will he value what is not done to him, but to another? Now though we be never ſo much taken up in the Acts of Religion and Vertue, yet that cannot be counted Homage and Worſhip payed unto GOD, unleſs we make him

him our *laſt end*; But it is ſervice only payed to that which we chiefly aim at, be it our ſelves and Riches, or Honour, or Pleaſure, or whatever elſe we have the greateſt regard to. That for which any thing is beloved, is of it ſelf more beloved, when *David* dealt kindly and lovingly with *Mephiboſheth* for *Jonathan* his Fathers ſake, it is a certain Argument that he loved *Jonathan* more then *Mephiboſheth*. He that loves a Man for Money, and for Meat, loves Money and Meat more then the Man, for theſe are the Cauſes and Ends wherefore he loves the Man; ſo he that ſerves GOD for any other End then GOD, he certainly loves that more then GOD. Now if we prefer any thing to GOD, we do not love him truly, nor will he regard us as upright before him. *He*, ſaith our Saviour, *who loveth Father or Mother, Son or Daughter, or his own life more then Me, is not worthy of Me*; *Matth.* 10. 37. *Luke* 14. 26. CHRIST upbraided the Men of *Capernaum* for following him, becauſe it *was for the loaves*. We do not reckon them our Friends, nor do we think our ſelves oblidged unto them who wait upon us and do us ſervice, becauſe they bring Gain and Advantage to themſelves thereby; theſe are *Mercenary Perſons*, but he is our

Friend, who abſtracting from his own Intereſt, or from any Advantage which we might procure him, doth freely and heartily ſet himſelf to pleaſe us, or to aſſiſt us in our Affairs. *If a Man viſits a ſick Friend, and watches at his pillow for Charities ſake, and becauſe of his old Affection, we approve it, but if he does it in hope of a Legacy, he is a Vulture,* ſaith *Seneca, and only watcheth for the Carcaſs*; So he is a *Mercenary and ſordid perſon* who reſpecteth more the Benefits which fall from GOD, then GOD himſelf, and GOD will not much regard this Man's ſervice; but he indeed ſhall pleaſe him, who being acted not ſo much out of Self-intereſt, as out of a *pure regard to GOD*, doth Serve and Obey him, who makes the *Glory of GOD his chief end*; and who aims at nothing more then to pleaſe him, and who is more glad of the Occaſion thereof, then of any *external Advantage* which redound by it. "*Non ſine præ-*
"*mio diligitur Deus*, ſaith holy *Bernard*, *etſi*
"*abſque præmii intuitu diligendus ſit*; that is,
"*GOD is never loved without a*
Bernard. "*reward, albeit he is not to be*
Tract. de "*loved chiefly for the Reward*;
dilig. DEO. "*our Love to Him can never be un-*
"*profitable, but yet it ſhould not be*
"Mercenary, *for it ſhould not ſeek its own things.*

The

"*The Soul that loveth GOD ſhould not require a* "*greater Reward of its Love, then GOD himſelf,* "*or if it require any other thing, it doth not love* "*GOD, but that other thing.*

But *Thirdly*, though we muſt chiefly ſerve GOD for himſelf, and what we do to him and for him muſt in the firſt place be out of *pure love to him*, yet we may have alſo a reſpect to our ſelves, and to our own proper good, this doth not hinder the other; theſe two are not inconſiſtent together to love our ſelves, and to deſire our own Happineſs needs not imped, but ſhould rather further our Loving GOD above all things. The beſt way of loving our ſelves is to endeavour the *enjoyment of GOD*, *ille ſatis ſe diligit qui ſedulo agit ut ſummo fruatur bono.* There are implanted in our very Nature great deſires of Happineſs, and it is impoſſible to root them out; we ſhall as ſoon ceaſe to be, as ceaſe to have Deſires for our Preſervation and well being, or not to intend this in all we do, and therefore it is certainly Lawfull to have an eye to our own Good and Felicity, providing that we ſubject this to the Glory of GOD, and make it ſubordinate to the Deſires of pleaſing him. It doth not Spoil or caſt a Blot upon a *Son's reſpect and love to his Father*, that he minds and ſeeks his

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own intereſt,& doth expect a ſhare in his Father's Inheritance; if ſo be he do it not to the greif and diſpleaſure of his Father; neither doth it ſhew that we want True Love to *God*, that we ſeek and aim at our own Happineſs, if ſo be we do not prefer our ſelves to GOD, nor yet take Courſes to obtain our Happineſs contrary to the Will aud Commands of GOD. In the LORD'S Prayer, which is both a Patern of our Prayers, and the rule of our Deſires, we are taught as in the firſt place to intend the *Glory of GOD*, *the hallowing of his Name*, *the Advancement of his Kingdom*, *and the fulfilling of his Will*; So thereafter to deſire our own Good in the neceſſary Suſtenance of our Soul and Bodies, and in our Deliverance from Sin and Danger. "The Goſpel doth not (ſaith one) "Plainly prohibit us the Love of our ſelves, "but teacheth only to Moderate it rightly, "to Subject it to GOD, and to referr it to "Him, we muſt not Love GOD for our "ſelves, ſo as that we our ſelves are to be "conſidered as the Laſt end, and GOD "only to be placed in the Order of Means, "by the fruition of whom we may be rend-"red Happy, but becauſe we pertain to "GOD whom we ought to Love above all "things, therefore alſo we ought to Love

our

" our ſelves with a reference to GOD: our " Good is therefore to be ſought, that in it " we may taſte the Goodneſs and Sweetneſs " of *God*, and that *Gods* peculiar meaſure, " (ſo to ſpeake) may be ſo much the more " enlarged; thus our own proper love ſhould " be ſwallowed up in that Ocean of the *Di-* " *vine Love.*

Fourthly, It is not only Allowable, but it is Neceſſary and Commanded, that we propoſe to our ſelves and have ſtill before our eyes the Eternal Rewards of the other World, and We can never intend theſe enough. They do not underſtand things well, who ſtudy to take Peoples thoughts off theſe, and who go about to perſwade Men, that that Obedience is not Perfect, which is done for Heaven; theſe are wild and *Extravagant Principles*, and it is ſometimes advanced and ſet forth by as *Romantik a fable*, of a Womans going with a Torch in the one hand, and a Bucket of Water in the other, the one to burn up Heaven, the other to drown out the fire of Hell; That Men might ſerve GOD neither for the Hopes of the One, neither out of Fear of the other. It is a peece of Arrogancy to model Mens Obedience otherwiſe then GOD hath done, and to offer

offer to take away these things which GOD hath Ordained, and which he hath proposed to Men to push them on the more forewardly in all manner of *well-doing*. And as one saith, *if the Dowry which GOD hath given to Vertue, and Religion, were taken away, they would perhaps have but few Platonick Lovers.*

------*Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam,*
Præmia si tollas ?

However all the Saints and Servants of GOD mentioned in *Scripture*, are said to have had the *Promises of GOD for the future Life* before them. We are told of *Moses, that he had a respect unto the recompence of the Reward*; *Heb.* 11. 26. And *Saint Paul* proposed to himself *the Crown of Righteousness*; 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. Yea it is said of our Saviour himself, *that he had an eye to the Joy which was set before him*; *Heb.* 12. 2. And *St. Peter* tells us the end wherefore there are given unto us, *such exceeding Great and Precious Promises, is that thereby we might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the Corruption that is in the world through lust*; 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Thus it is not only Lawfull and Necessary for us to look often to that which GOD himself hath proposed to us; that we may be the more Power-

Powerfully Excited and Encouraged to run the Wayes of GOD, and to keep his Commandements: Nay the Glory and Felicity of the other World is a thing which GOD hath chiefly before him, and therefore we ſhould have it alſo. Obedience to the Laws of GOD is the Means only to carry it on, and ſo the end why we ſhould do this, is to obtain that, and by intending that we truly Glorifie GOD, and do ſhew that we prefer him before all things. For the Main and great Happineſs of Heaven it ſelf conſiſts in the clear Knowledge and full Enjoyment of GOD; and therefore, as one ſaith, *it is too great nicety to diſtinguiſh between GOD and Heaven, his Glory and our Salvation, for they are not really things diſtinct; We cannot in a true Senſe ſeek the Salvation of our Souls more then the Glory of God, for the one is the Advancement of the other. Heaven is not a thing without us, nor is happineſs diſtinct from a Conjunction with God, to love God above our ſelves, is not indeed ſo properly to love him above the Salvation of our Souls, as if they were diſtinct things, but it is to love Him above all our Sinful Affections and particular Beeings, and to conform our ſelves to him.* See Smith Sel: Diſ: pag. 399

Fifthly and Laſtly, the propoſing to our

ſelves the *temporal enjoyments* of this World, as a *Principal end*, the making Wealth, Honor and Riches a main Motive why we ſerve GOD, and Obey him, is altogether Unlawfull. It is a peece of the groſſeſt Hypocriſie, and Men do thereby diſhonour GOD and Religion, in making them ſtoup for to Serve their *baſe Carnal deſigns*; they who are guilty of this, cannot be ſaid ſo much to exerciſe Religion and Vertue, as to abuſe them, and in ſteed of Honouring *GOD* they do but put a Mock upon him, like that *Gentleman* in *Elian*, who coming into the preſence of the *Perſian* King, at his entry into the Preſence Chamber he ſtouped to take up his Ring, which he purpoſely let fall, that thereby he might be thought to pay that adoration to that Monarch which the Laws obliged him to. Satan laid this to *Job's* charge, and would have made it believed, that it was only GOD'S Bleſſing him with Outward Proſperity which tied him ſo much to the Service of GOD. doth *Job*, ſaith he, *Fear GOD for nought? Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about all his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath,*

and

and he will curse thee to thy face; Job 1. *verse* 10, 11. The Devil thought *Job* was of the humor of some who keep close by a Man, whilst any thing is to be expected from him, and that he is in a capacity of doing them good, but so soon as Fortune frowns, and his Condition alters they turn their backs and run away: To take off which tash from *Job*, and to convince the World of the falshood of this Accusation, it was that GOD gave *Satan* power over all that which he possessed. And indeed though the serving of GOD be the most Natural, Reasonable and Proper Way, for securing to our selves the good things of this Life, yet he suffers his Faithful Servants sometimes to fare worst, that their Sincerity may be tryed and manifested, and that Men may learn thereby to seek and serve him for higher and more *noble ends*. GOD requires us to *mortifie all immoderate desires for the things of this Life*, to be so far denyed to all *sublunary enjoyments*, as neither to care much, whither we have them or want them, not to be overjoyed and lifted up when they come unto us; nor yet dejected and cast down when they remove from us; and therefore it is not lawful for us to have our Hearts set upon that

which GOD teacheth us to deſpiſe, and beſides that can be no true and proper Motive to *Religion*, and the *Service of GOD*, which ſometimes cannot be obtained, otherwiſe then by ſwerving from them; *ye cannot ſerve GOD and Mammon*, ſaith CHRIST, and the Reaſon is clear, becauſe their Commands often interfere and come in Competition together. We cannot ſometimes ſecure our Life or Fortune, our Honour or Means but by renouncing GOD, and Obedience to his Laws, wherefore our Saviour tells us plainly, *if any Man come to Me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren, and Siſters, yea and his own life alſo, he cannot be My Diſciple*; *Luke* 14. 26. That is, if a Man cannot find in his Heart to part with theſe freely, he needs not offer to follow Him, for he will ſometimes be neceſſitat to leave him. If to have the World be the *chief motive* why one comes to GOD, for the ſame Reaſon, he will ſometimes foreſake him, and GOD will have no Regard to that Man, who minds not to be conſtant, but who ſerveth only for a time. Wherefore I wiſh that Wealth, Honour and other *Temporal things*, were leſs inſiſted on as Motives to *Chriſtian duties*, though I deny it, but that it may be proper enough ſome

ſometime, or occaſionally to ſhew that *Religion* conduceth to our *preſent happineſs*, as the *Poet* ſaith,

----------Semita certe
Tranquillæ per virtutem patet unica vitæ.

But who come to CHRIST meerly for theſe Worldly Reſpects, cannot be accounted Converts: and as he upbraided the Men of *Capernaum*, ſo it may be ſaid to them; *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, ye ſeek me not becauſe ye ſaw the miracles, but becauſe ye did eat of the Loaves, and were filled*; John 6: 26.

But here it will be objected and ſaid, by ſome, doth not GOD in the Scripture give us many Temporal Promiſes? Doth he not frequently propoſe to us Wealth, and Honour, and the other good things of this Life, as the Reward of our Obedience; and is it Unlawfull to have an eye to GODS own Promiſe, and to Deſire that Reward which he hath propoſed? *For Anſwer hereto*, we are to conſider that GOD makes theſe Promiſes, not to draw our Hearts after the World, or to make us think that our Happineſs lies in the enjoyment thereof; but only to free us from Immoderate Cares, and to engage us to ſerve Him without Anxiety and Solicitude for theſe Temporall things we ſtand in need of while we are here.

That

That we may not be diverted from the Service of GOD, nor interrupted in our pursuite of these Eternal Felicities in the other World, by a too great thoughtfulnes for the Relief of our Necessities in this; therefore it is that GOD hath made us the Promise not only of what is simply Necessary, but even also of Plenty and Abundance, and the only use we are to make of these Promises, is to encourage our selves with the Expectation of what is Good, Usefull and Convenient for us, and all the Reason why we should desire these things here below is, that we may be rendred thereby more *serviceable* to GOD, and more Profitable unto others, that the *good things* of this World may become to us Pledges of these *better things* above.

Temporalia hæc me, O Domine, juvent utentem, non corrumpant mentem & amorem meum retorqueant in te Artificem eorum, ne in his quæ placent mihi, ego displiceam tibi. Amem hæc, sed plus te amem, & hæc propter te amen; Et si ista diligam, ut subjecta diligam, ut famulantia diligam, diligam ut arrham sponsi, ut munera amici, ut beneficia Domini, sic tamen ut meminerim semper, quæ tibi debeam, ista propter te, & per ista, & super ista te diligam. Illis adhæream dilectione transitoria, tibi inhæream dilectione manseria.

The

The ſum of what we have ſaid in Anſwer to the Queſtion propoſed is this, That there is an Indiſpenſible Obligation upon us to ſerve GOD, abſtracting from any Conſideration of the Benefit to be had thereby, and that our Services are then beſt and moſt Acceptable, when they are performed in Regard of *GOD* himſelf, and out of *Pure love* to him: but that however we may Reſpect our own Good, and Seek our own Happineſs, and purſue for *Heaven* and *Eternal Life*; for this is not inconſiſtent with the *Pureſt love* of *GOD*, but only *Subordinate* thereunto. But as for the *Temporal things* of this World, it is Unlawful to make them our *Chief* and *Ultimat End*, or to propoſe them to our ſelves as any main *Motive* & inducement to the Obſervance of GOD, or his Laws, for we ſhould reſolve to cleave to GOD, whither he gives us theſe things or no; Nay though he ſhould leave us altogether Deſtitute of all Worldly Help and Comfort, yet it ſhould be our Reſolution never to forſake him, ſaying with holy *Job*, *though he ſlay me*, *yet will I truſt in him*; Iob 13. 15.

Now as to *Jacob's* caſe in Particular, it doth not appear that he ſwerved from theſe *General poſitions*, which we have laid down, yea

yea it ſeems evident, that he kept cloſe to them. He makes, 'tis true, his Requeſts for himſelf *firſt*, but his Serving and Honouring of GOD might be the *chief thing* he had before him: If he had Aimed more at his own *Private Intereſt*, than at the *Glory* of GOD, he would not have been ſo *Modeſt* in his *Deſires*, nor yet contented himſelf with ſo ſmall a Portion as *Food* and *Raiment*, he would certainly have ſought more; but that he did not ſeek more, makes it clear, that he gave himſelf freely to GOD without Reſpect to his Benefits. GOD had been promiſing him the *whole land of Canaan for a poſſeſſion to him and his Poſterity*, and he to let ſee that it was not upon that Account he tied himſelf to GOD, and Reſolved to become his Servant, he asked no more but *Food and Raiment*. As if he had ſaid, "though thou do not ſo great "things, if thou grant but Food and Rai. "ment. If thou wilt *but bring me back to my* "*Fathers houſe in peace*, though I ſhould never "brook this *Land* as my *Property* and *Poſ-* "*ſeſſion*, *yet thou ſhalt be my God*". Thus *Jacob* loved GOD for himſelf, like a Friend and not for his Benefits, like a Merchant. Could *Jacob* have paſſed by *Food and Rayment* as well as he did all other good Benefits

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of GOD, he would not have given himself thus unto GOD upon Composition, but absolutely and without Condition. Now he is constrained to fall upon the Condition *of Food and Raiment*, for without this he could not love his GOD, because without this he could not subsist, not have his Being, by which he evidently witnesses, that he therefore, and for no neither End desired to be, but only to Love and Serve his GOD. It was an excellent speech of *Crispus Passienus*, a witty Gentleman of *Rome*, *quorundam se judicium malle quam Beneficium, quorundam Beneficium malle quam judicium*, that is *Some Mans Respect and good Opinion is more to be esteemed then another Man's Benefit*; and one saith, that *Jacob* here doth express the same Conceit: for when he came to compound with *Laban* he made his Bargain in another manner, he would not serve him for *Bread* and *Raiment* only, *but fourteen years for his Daughters, and six years for his Flock*, by which Means he became Rich, and Wealthy, and the Reason why he Covenanted thus differently with GOD, and with *Laban* was, because with *Laban* he sought his own commodity, but with GOD only his Acceptance and Favour.

Hales Rem. pa: 223.

From this Example of *Jacob's* we ſhould all of us learn this Leſſon to aim at the Glory of GOD in all our Deſires, when we make any Requeſts for any *Particular Favours*, the chief thing which ſhould Prompt us thereto ſhould be that we may have the *occaſion of ſerving* GOD, ſome way or other more eminently. Thus *Hannah* when ſhe Prayed for a Son, ſhe at the ſame time *vowed to devote him to GOD*. And *David* beſought the LORD earneſtly, *to have mercy upon him, and to conſider the trouble which he ſuffered of them which hate him*; and the end why he deſired this was, *that I may*, ſaith he, *ſhew forth all thy Praiſe in the gates of the Daughter of Zion*; *Pſal.* 9. 13, 14. Whither we call for *Spiritual* or *Temporal Bleſſings*, we ſhould ſeek them not for themſelves, or to reſt in the meer enjoyment of them, but to reflect Honour on GOD, that we having ſuch things may be capacitated and enabled to do him greater Service, we muſt not let the Reins looſe to our Deſires, and be over anxious for the enlargement of our State; for oftentimes there is as much of Vanity, and ſeeking our own Praiſe in this, as any other thing. Whither we have little or much, what ever our Condition be, be it great or ſmall, we may yet have opportunities enough of Glo-

rifying

rifying GOD; *Jacob* ſought here but *Food and Raiment*, and ſuppoſing he ſhould get no more, yet he *devoted* himſelf to GOD, and reſolved to own and acknowledge Him.

CHAP. II.

Shewing the Importance of the Words, The LORD ſhall be my GOD.

SECTION I.

The True Senſe of the Words is given, and a Propoſal of the Particulars to be Treated on under this head.

WE come now to the particular Conſideration of what the *Patriarch vowed* and *promiſed* here. He puts up three Requeſts unto GOD, and here alſo he makes three expreſs and *particular Promiſes*: the *firſt* of which is, *that the LORD ſhall be his GOD.* Some render theſe words otherwiſe then we

have them in our Translation, and put another ſenſe upon them; they have it *cumque fuerit Dominus mihi Deus*, making it a fourth Petition, importing as much as if he had ſaid, *if the LORD indeed will be to me a GOD*, which is indeed a very great and comprehenſive Requeſt, and doth include all deſirable Hapineſs, for what can One ask more then that GOD ſhould maniteſt his Wiſdom, his Power, his Goodneſs, and all his other Glorious Perfections for his particular behoof and benefit. Wherefore the *Pſalmiſt* having prayed for the flourishing of their State, *That their Sons may be as Plants grown up in their Youth, and their Daughters as Corner-ſtones, poliſhed after the ſimilitude of a Palace, that their Garners may be full, affording all manner of Store, that their Sheep might bring forth thouſands and ten thouſands in their ſtreets, their Oxen ſtrong to labour, that there be no breaking in or going out, nor any complaining in the Streets*; Having, I ſay, prayed for this, and being much taken with the Conſideration of that Happineſs, he cryes out, *Happy is that People that is in ſuch a caſe!* but preſently he checks himſelf, and upon ſecond thoughts cryes, *Yea, happy is that People whoſe GOD is the LORD*; *Pſal.* 144. 15. intimating thereby to us, that the LORDS intereſſing himſelf in

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any People, and becoming their GOD, was a greater Happiness, then all that which he had formerly spoken of, did amount to.

But how great and Desirable soever this be in it self, yet we see no Reason why we should interpret the words in this sense, especially seeing they should by this means coincide with the *first petition*, for *the LORD to be with One*, and *to be One's GOD*, is one and the same thing, and it is not likely that *Jacob* would have come over twice with one thing in so short a Prayer. However our Translation in this agrees with the *Hebrew*, *Septuagint*, and the *Vulgar Latine*, and we judge it best and more Reasonable to take the words this way.

Here then when *Jacob* promises, that *the LORD shall be his GOD*, it implies two things, *First*, that he would not serve the Gods *of the Nations*, whither on this or the other side *Jordan*; that he should take care not to be corrupted with the *Idolatry of the rest of the World*. *Secondly*, that he should Faithfully serve *the GOD of his Fathers*, *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, who had here honoured him with a signal manifestation of his Presence; and that to him, and to him only, he should pay all the Homage, Deference, Worship, and Service which is due from Reasonable

Creatures

Creatures to the *true GOD*. For to take One to be our GOD, is to carry towards him, as to such a *Supreme* and *Infinit Beeing*, and to yield him what is proper from us who are so far below the *Deity*, and who depend upon it for Life, Breath, and all things.

Thus you see what the *Patriarch* here engadged himself to: And it doth first appear, that it was not an *Arbitrary Free-will-offering* which he here Pitched upon; it was not a thing which he could have passed over, and been Blameless; It is a *Natural or moral duty*, which he and all Men as Men, that is, as *Rational Creatures* are strictly obliged unto, This is *the first and great Commandement*, all other are but parts and branches of this: Wherefore it is that we find this set first in that sum and Abridgement of the *Moral law*, which *Moses* had from GOD, and delivered to the People of *Israel*: *Thou shalt have no other GODS before me*, Requires the same, and neither less nor more then that which *Jacob* here *Vowes* and *Resolves* on, *Viz.* that there shall be no declining and falling off, to the Worship of false GODS, and that the *true* GOD shall have all the Worship and Service which properly belongs to him.

Wherefore that we may be stirred up to imitate

imitate *Jacob's* Practice, and to conform to his Reſolutions as well as his Deſires: we ſhall GOD willing clear and make out theſe following Particulars, *Firſt*, that all Men ought to Worſhip GOD. *Secondly*, that they ought to be very wary in the Object of their *Worſhip*, that it be the *true* GOD and none elſe whom they adore. *Thirdly*, we ſhall ſhew what Worſhip and Service is requiſite to be payed to the *true* GOD.

SECTION II.

Of the Reaſonableneſs and Neceſſity of Worſhipping GOD.

AS to the *firſt*, that all Men ought to Worſhip GOD, we ſhall not need to inſiſt much thereon, it being a confeſſed Principle, and the very dictat of *Natural Conſcience*: So that not only thoſe to whom the Word of GOD hath come, but even ſuch alſo as never had any *Particular Revelation*, have yet looked upon themſelves as obliged to the Worſhip of a diety. All the World have conſented

consented in this, for though there be some *Nations* without Learning, Coin, Cloathes, and the like instances of Politness and Civility; yet none are so Barbarous as to be without the Acknowledgement of a GOD. Some considering the *Natural propness* of Men to the Worship of a GOD, have defined Man to be *Animal Religiosum*, and have made *Religion* and not Reason the difference betwixt him and other Creatures. And indeed we never shew so much Reason, or Act so much above the *Inferiour Creatures*, as when we are taken up in the Exercise of Vertue and Religion; all other Actings are but Sense, and *Animal motions*, in which there be many Brutes who do often out-doe us. But when our Reason doth exerce it self in *Religion*, it is so far above their reach that they cannot offer at an imitation.

Religion and the Worship of GOD, doth indeed suppose that there is One, which we may very well suppose, it being a Truth so evident and demonstrable. Every thing in Nature doth so clearly prove the *existence of a Deity*, that we can never sufficiently admire the Blindness and Stupidity of those who call it in Question. And indeed because it Argues such Stupidity; some have

doubted

doubted whither there be, or can be, any real *ſpeculative Atheiſts*, and do imagine that ſuch as have pretended *Atheiſm*, have done it only out of an *oſtentation of Wit*, and for to ſhew their Smartneſs, in being able to Oppoſe and *Diſpute* the plaineſt and moſt *received Opinions*. But whither there be any *Atheiſts* or not, the *Beeing of a Deity* may be eaſily made appear to any whoſe eyes are but open to ſee it: His very *Nature* carries a *Demonſtration* in it, and all things elſe do prove his *Exiſtence*, *Præſentemque refert quælibet herba Deum.* If we look *within* our own ſelves, there ſeems to be ſuch an *Impreſſion of a GOD* ſtamped upon our Minds, as is not eaſily defaced and blotted out; And how we could have this, without a GOD, is very hard if not impoſſible to Reſolve. And if we take a view of the World without, either of the Parts ſingly by themſelves, or in their Conjunction together, we ſhall diſcern ſuch admirable Wiſdom in their Contrivance, as might be ſufficient to draw the moſt Incredulous to an Acknowledgement: for theſe things are either the *effects of Chance*, or they are the Works of a Wiſe Agent; If the laſt be ſaid, a *Deity* is granted, and it will be very ſtrange if any have the Impudence to aſſert the *firſt*. He may

believe any thing in the World, though never ſo Monſtruous, who can imagine *blind Chance* could have hit ſo well, or that things of themſelves could have jumped ſo luklily together, as that the greateſt or even *infinit wiſdom* cannot be ſuppoſed to Rectifie, or to have contrived otherwiſe. And therefore it was well ſaid by the *Lord Verulam*, "*I had* Eſſay 16 "*rather beleive all the Fables in the Le-*"*gend, & the Talmud, & the Alcoran, then* "*that this Univerſal Frame is without a Mind*". The *Atheiſts* ordinarly object, againſt ſuch as *believe a GOD*, as if they were too Credulous, and of an eaſie belief; But there is more Reaſon to retort this upon themſelves, for they are the moſt Credulous who believe the moſt unlikely things, or what hath the leaſt appearance of Truth: Now what can be more improbable, nay impoſſible then that Things ſhould be produced without any Cauſe, or that there ſhould be no Wiſdom or Underſtanding, where the greateſt Effects and Inſtances thereof are to be ſeen. Though one did take *Garagantua* or *Don Quixot* for true Hiſtory, or did believe the Wildeſt and moſt Unlikely Forgeries of the *old Extravagant Romances*; I could not yet think him ſo abſurd, or judge him to have ſo large a ſwallow, as the *Atheiſt*, who *denies a* GOD, when

when there are ſo many and ſo great evidences and Demonſtrations thereof.

Now if there be a GOD, as certainly there is One, there is nothing more clear then that He ſhould be Worſhipped. The very *Atheiſts* will grant this, even thoſe who as yet *deny a God*, will acknowledge the neceſſity of Worſhipping One if he be found; And in Truth it is hard to tell which of the two are moſt unreaſonable, *he who denies there is a GOD, or he who refuſes to worſhip the GOD whom he believes.* If Prudence and Intereſt, do oblidge Men to Honour and Obey Kings and Monarchs, that under their Favour they may enjoy Safety and Peace; ſhould not every one for that ſame very Reaſon, adore and do homage to the *great King*, to whom all the Princes and Potentates of the World muſt ſubmit and bow themſelves? Though he ſit in the Heavens, yet His Dominion reacheth over all; the whole World is filled with his Preſence, he ruleth the Children of Men, and there is no ſafety but in his Protection, nor any Security but in his Favour. *The LORD*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *is a great GOD, and a great King above all Gods. In his Hand are the deep places of the Earth: The Strength of Hills is his alſo. The Sea is His, and he made it: And his Hands formed the*

dry-land. Therefore he infers, and that rightly, *O come let us Worſhip and bow down, Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for he is our God, and we are the People of his Paſture, and the Sheep of his Hand;* Pſ. 95. 3, &c. If Men needed not either care for the *Divine Favour*, or much to fear his Wrath, they might be ſomewhat excuſable, though they did not highly regard GOD, but ſeeing it is utterly impoſſible that ever they can be in ſuch a Condition, wherein they ſtand in no need of GOD, or may eaſily protect themſelves from the effects of his Anger, it is the moſt unaccountable madneſs to neglect him, and to be careleſs to pleaſe him. It is even ſuch and greater madneſs, as 't would be for a *poor Peaſant* or other *mean Fellow*, to ſlight or ſhew a contempt of ſome mighty *Monarch*, while under his Power, and within his Reach. None have leſs Reaſon to make Pretenſions to wit, then thoſe who ſlight *Piety*, and caſt off all *regard to GOD*; becauſe none act more contrary to common Prudence and the *Principles of Reaſon.* Contempt or careleſneſs of the *Divine Worſhip* can never be *juſtified*; unleſs Men could be certainly aſſured *that there is no God*, which the greateſt *Atheiſt* never yet pretended to, nor can he? or elſe that they could extricate themſelves from

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all dependence upon GOD, which as it is not deſireable, ſo neither is it poſſible. And therefore it is abſolutely neceſſary, that all Men concern themſelves in the Worſhip of GOD, and that they be careſull while they live to *Own* and Acknowledge Him, which who ſo Refuſeth ſhall not paſs Unpuniſhed. They who will not willingly Own and *Submit* themſelves to Him, ſhall certainly fall under the dint of his Fury. Now therefore, *conſider this, ye that forget GOD, leſt He tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver*; *Pſal.* 50. 22.

SECTION III.

What Care ſhould be had to Direct our Worſhip to the True GOD; Rules how to do it. Where alſo the Idolatry of the Romiſh Church *is conſidered.*

AS thus you ſee it is neceſſary we Worſhip *God*, ſo by the ſame Reaſon it becomes no leſs neceſſary that we Worſhip the True GOD, which was the *Second particular* we promiſed to

to ſpeak to. As *there is a GOD*, ſo there is but One True GOD, to whom and to none elſe we muſt direct our Worſhip, and our Religious Services; For if we adore any other then him, or make any Partner of our Worſhip with him, we are guilty of a Crime which is not eaſily pardoned, for it is a dethroning of GOD. And therefore, *Job*, ſaith, *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined or the Moon walking in brightneſs: And my heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my mouth hath Kiſſed my hand*? That is, if ever he was guilty of Worſhipping the Sun, or the Moon, he acknowledgeth that *this were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judge: For thereby*, ſaith the *he*, *I ſhould have denied the GOD that is above*; Job. 31. 26. 27. 28. *Sceptra non ferunt ſocios*. Kings can endure no Copartners, will *God* ſuffer any Rival with him? he will not endure that any ſhould ſhare in that Honour which is due to himſelf alone. *I am the LORD*, ſaith he, *that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give to another, neither my Praiſe to graven Images*, Iſa 42. 8. *Idolatry* or the Worſhip of *falſe GODS*, is ſuch an abomination, and doth ſo highly provoke the *True GOD*, that nothing will, or can excuſe it; neither is there any thing which he is more Jealous of: A Man's *Seroufneſs*

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or *Sincerity* will never endear his Worſhip, and render it acceptable, Unleſs it be directed to the right Object, Though one be a favourer of *Monarchy* in the general more than any other Government, yet he can never be counted Loyal, if he neglect his True Prince, and follow an Uſurper, no more then he who is for no King at all. Even ſo though one be never ſo Devout and Serious in his way, yet unleſs it be the True GOD whom he Adores, he is not to be eſteemed a Friend, and Lover of GOD, he cannot be Reckoned otherwiſe then as an Enemy, as well as thoſe who are altogether *Irreligious* and *Profane.* We muſt be ſure then that we Worſhip the True GOD and none elſe, otherwiſe it is to no purpoſe to Worſhip any: For to worſhip none, and to Worſh a Falſe GOD, will be alike profitable, that is certainly, they will be both of them hurtfull and pernicious: for either of them will incenſe the true GOD, and make him ſet himſelf againſt us to deſtroy us.

Now as it concerneth us to worſhip the true GOD and none elſe, ſo that we may be ſure to worſhip him and none other, let us firſt Labour to get right Apprehenſions of the *Divine Nature*, and *Attributes.* Let

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us be carefull to keep in mind how he is the *Supreme Being*, *Eternal*, *Infinit* and *Independent* from all others, that he *is Almighty*, *most wise*, *most just*, and *good*, and *Holy*; A *pure Spirit*, who is not only free from all *imperfections*, but who is *infinitlie excellent beyond what can be apprehended*, and *who is every where present*. For as the *Apostle* saith, *he is not far from every one of us in him we all live, move, and have our beeing*. Tis this and nothing else which we call GOD, He and none other hath these Properties and Excellencies; And therefore not only what we Worship, must be such; but also we must be carefull to Worship Him under the consideration of a being thus *infinitly excellent* and *glorious*, or else we *Worship we know not* what. Instead of the *True GOD* we do but set up an Idol, which our own Fancie hath devised. Tis true an adequat Comprehensive Knowledge of God, or of any of his Attributes, is not possible; *for he dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see*; He being *infinite*, and we *finite*, we are not capable of such an exact full knowledge of him. Wherefore it will not follow that One is ignorant of the True God, because his knowledge of him is imperfect, for the knowledge which the best have, or can

can have is no other. Nay farther, it is not reasonable to inter, that men are mistaken about the *true God*, because they err about these things which are deduceable from the right consideration of some of his *Attributes*, or because they have not right or true apprehensions of some of the effects of his wisdom, power or goodness. Every one is not capable of drawing proper consequences from truths, and the consequences are not alwayes so clear as the truth it self; it would be too severe to charge one with the denial of a truth, because he does not close with what may follow upon it: Unless the one be as clear and evident as the other, when two things are not a like evident, neither their connexion very palpable, though in themselves they may be really inseparable, Men may err very innocently and excusably about them; and cannot be said to reject what is evident, because they do not hold the other which is not so. As to the *present case*, that God is *Almighty*, *Wise*, *Just*, *Holy*, & *Good*, is clear and demonstrable, so that they are altogether inexcusable who do not believe it: But the most proper methods and manner of exercing his *Power*, *Wisdom*, and *Justice*, *&c.* Are not so discernable by us, and therefore if men differ about them, it is no great

wonder; and it ſavours ſomewhat of arrogancie, to offer to determine them too particularly. If ſilly Country-clowns were to ſpeak of State Policie, and Regal Grandeur, 'tis not to be doubted but that they would err groſly, becauſe they have not true or exact notions thereof: But it is leſs to be doubted, that it is more beyond the wiſeſt man's reach, to tell exactly what is ſutable to the glory of God, and agreable to *infinite wiſdom, power*, and *juſtice*. What boldneſs were it to ſay peremptorly, *God ſhould have done or not have done this, & that if he had or not had done ſo & ſo he would have acted unworthily?* What of the *divine actions* are plainly revealed, we ſee clearly are agreeable to the moſt *perfect conceptions* of a *Deity*, and what is kept ſecret, we ought rather to admire in ſilence, then to ſit down and curiouſly reſolve: And if men will needs attempt the reſolution of the hidden *myſteries* of *God's Councill*, and preſcribe Rules for that end, they ſhould rather be check'd for their bold and too curious medling, then unbraided with a falſe *god*, becauſe their ſentiments cannot be ſo exactly adjuſted to the more common notions of *juſtice* and *equity* which men have. Wherefore the deriding the God of the *Calviniſts*, *as one of late hath done, deſerves a ſevere cenſure and chaſtiſement;

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For whither these *Calviniſtical tenets* concerning *Gods* Decrees, be true or falſe, the believing or not believing them will not infer a *denial* or not owning of the *true God*? and ſeing the *Calviniſts* acknowledge all the *Attributes* of a *Deity*, and believe in him only who is declared the *true God*, therefore they cannot be ſaid to worſhip any other: and he who mocks at the God whom they worſhip, mocks at the *true God* himſelf, and how great a ſin this is, *I* leave it to any to judge. But to return whence we degreſſed, it is requiſite that every one ſtudy to get the higheſt and moſt worthy thoughts of GOD, and it is abſolutly neceſſary that they acknowledge what is expreſly contain'd in the very *Idea of God*, as that he is *Almighty, moſt Wiſe, moſt Juſt & Good above all things, and the cauſe of all things*: For God is only a ſhort term, uſed to expreſſe theſe perfections by; and therefore who takes any of *them* away, deſtroys the very *nature of God*; and who worſhips what he doth not aſcribe theſe properties to, worſhips not *God*, but ſome other thing. Even as he is altogether ignorant of a *circle* or *triangle*, who does not conſider the one, as a *figure* made up of three lines with three *diſtinct angles*; and the

Turners Defence of his Sermon about Freedom.

other of one round line, whoſe parts are all equally diſtant from the center; who knows not this, is quite deſtitute of the notion of theſe figures: But if one knows this much, he cannot but be ſaid to have the right notion of a *circle* and *triangle*, though he do not underſtand all which knowing and skilfull *Mathematicians* demonſtrate about them.

But it is not enough for preſerving our ſelves from *Idolatry* that we get and *maintain* ſome right *true* and *proper notions of a Deity*. Men may have theſe, and yet be *Idolaters*; in that they fix theſe notions where they ought not, and aſcribe them to that which in it ſelf is not God. Thus the *Heathens* were guilty of *Idolatry*: for many of them, were not ſo much miſtaken in their *conceptions* of God, as in the application of their general *conceptions*, to the particular *objects* of their worſhip, when they ſpake of God (at leaſt the wiſe & underſtanding perſons among them) they ſhewed that they believed him a *Supreme Beeing* of great Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs: and therefore they term'd him alwayes the *Summum Numen*, *Deus ter optimus maximus*. So that their ſentiments concerning the Nature and Attributes of GOD, could not be ſo much found fault with as their groſs abſurdity in miſapplying theſe properties,

ties of the *Divine Nature:* For ſome affixed the *Numen* or *Deity* to the *Sun*, others to the *Moon*, or to ſome other of the *Celeſtiall Bodies*; as the *Author* of the book of wiſdom ſpeaks, *they deemed either Fire, or Wind, or the ſwift Air, or the circle of the Stars, or the violent water, or the lights of Heaven to be the Gods which govern the World*; *Wiſ.* 13. 2. And though this was *a ſotiſh errour*, yet not ſo deteſtable as theirs who worſhiped *four footed beaſts, and creeping things, and roots and herbs*, as we read the *Egyptians* did.

They may have been misled into theſe *abominations*, through the infirmity of their Minds: which could not fix ſteedily on a thing ſo *Spiritual*, and ſo wholly abſtracted from *Senſe* as GOD is, without the help of *Senſible repreſentations*, which might affect their *imaginations*; Wherefore, the better to bring GOD to their Minds, & that they might keep him the more eaſily in their Thoughts, thy have have deviſed ſuch *Bodily figures* and *groſs repreſentations*. Or not attending to the True Nature of GOD, they have imagined that he was confin'd to ſome peculiar place and ſeeing none more Glorious then the *Sun*, or other *Celeſtiall Bodies*, therefore have at firſt only fancied theſe to be the *Seat of Divine Majeſty:* But in

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Proceſſe of time have degenerate into the groſſer belief of their being *Gods*. Being *delighted with there beauty*, *ſaith* the foreſaid *Authour*, *they took them to be Gods*. And as to that *Aſtoniſhing* as well as *inexcuſable Blockiſhneſs* of Worſhiping *Beaſts*, *and Inſects*, *and Roots*, it might been occaſioned either through a miſunderſtanding of their *Sages or Wiſemen*, who treating of GOD have uſed ſuch *Symbols* and *Hieroglyphicks*: Or elſe upon the ſurpriſe of ſome vertue and uſeful quality, or a deſtroying Power in theſe things, which their *Ignorance* could not otherwiſe reſolve by a particular and ſome more then *ordinary preſence of the Deity*.

But 'tis nor our preſent buſineſs, to enquire into the cauſe and occaſion of Mens being guilty of *Idolatry*. The chief thing which at preſent we would have marked, is that Men may be *Idolaters*, even while their apprehenſions of a *Deity* are not ſo very groſſe: 'tis true the *Attributes and Perfections* of GOD, and the nature of things *Viſible* and material are ſo inconſiſtent, that it might be thought none would take what is of this laſt kind, for the other; but 'tis as true, that there is nothing more ordinary, then for Men to Join in their opinions and *Practices* what are really repugnant and inconſiſtent

inconſiſtent together. Wherefore to ſhun all Guilt and Suſpicion of *Idolatry* it is not only neceſſary to have ſome knowlec'ge of a GOD, *how he is a Being, great and powerful, &c.* But alſo that we be ſure of his *Deity*, whom wee Worſhip, and to whom we addreſſe our ſelves, by finding out in him what only can be appropriate to the true GOD, and none elſe. A Woman muſt not only have an eſteem for her Husband, & a reſolution to admit none other, but muſt actually take a care that ſhe do it not, otherwiſe ſhe does not preſerve her Faith and Chaſtity: If one addreſſe himſelf to her, and She ſhould admit him to a *Conjugal Freedom*, without examining whither he were her true Husband, or receiving any certain evidence thereof, ſhe commits *Adultery*. So if we take any for GOD, and honour him as ſuch, without ſure and infallible tokens which manifeſt his Godhead, we draw on our ſelves the guilt of *Idolatry*, which is *Spiritual adultery*. If Mens minds had never been corrupted with *Idolatrous apprehenſions*, if they had never turned aſide, and deviſed ſtrange *gods*, that is more then one; then it would have been ſufficient to have directed our *Worſhip to a Deity*, for then all Worſhip would have been the worſhip

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of the true GOD: But now that the World hath been, ſo miſerably o'reſpread with Idolatry, and that Men are become ſo vain in their imaginations as to ſet up falſe *Gods* and to aſcribe a Deity to many things; Therefore it is neceſſary that we be very wary, and not only Deſign to have our Worſhip terminate in the True, for who Worſhip *Falſe Gods* intend this: But that it may really do ſo, we muſt diſcern what doth certainly particularize the true GOD, and as it were Single him out from all the falſe *Gods* of the World.

Now it needs not puzle us much or put us to any great difficulty to find out who is the True, amongſt the ſeveral pretended Deities; a ſmall enquiry will eaſily determine the point: We ſhall not have well begun to examine, when it ſhall appear who is *True*, & who *Falſe*. It is a ſpeech of *Tully*, the *Heathen Orator*, *utinam tam facile veram religionem invenire poſſim, quam falſam convincere; I wiſh I could as eaſily find out the true GOD, as detect who is falſe:* But the one will certainly follow upon the other. *Solomon* at once diſcovered the *falſe Mother, and the true by making a tryal of their Motherly affection and behaviour*; So by examining the account of thoſe Gods which are mentioned among Men, and

and the Actions aſcribed to them, which of them are the moſt *God-like*, we ſhall preſently diſcern both the *True* GOD, and ſuch as are *falſe*.

Theſe can be no *Gods* who have derived their beeing, whoſe Genealogies can be given account of, who could do no great thing for thoſe who adored them, nay could not deliver themſelves, who were acted with *Humane Paſſions*, and were guilty of *Groſſe vices*, and who never gave any token whereby they might be known to be *Gods*; But are meerly ſupported by *Poeticall Fictions*, and the imaginations of Men. And ſo *Jupiter* and *Saturne*, and *Apollo*, and *all the ancient and preſent Pagan Gods* muſt fall to the ground; And in a word, none can ſtand but the GOD whom the *Jews* of old Worſhipped, and who is ſtill Worſhipped and acknowledged by *Chriſtians*: For what he hath done, ſpeake him out clearly the *True and Ever-living GOD*, who alone reigneth in the World.

And as it is Man's intereſt as well as Duty, to Worſhip the *True* GOD; So this true GOD never left himſelf *without Witneſſe* in the World, that ſuch as were deſirous, might know and find him, and that others might be rendred inexcuſable. *The inviſible things*

of him, ſaith *St. Paul*, *from the creation of the World are clearlie ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and God-head, ſo that they*, who are not convinced, *are without excuſe*. His Works which are every where to be ſeen, did point him out; but ſuch was the perverſeneſs of Men; that they withſtood them: Becauſe they were *common* and *ordinarie*, therefore they became ineffectuall, for bringing them to the *Knowledge* of the *True* GOD, and the retaining them in His Service. They loſt memory of the *Creation*; and as for the dayly Acts of GODS Providence, *in doing good giving rain, and bleſſing with fruitfull Seaſons*, they wrought litle or nothing upon them: And then he was pleaſed, to give other *Signal and extraordinary manifeſtations of himſelf*, which was ſufficient to convince the moſt *Obſtinat* and *Incredulous*. Thus to aſcend no higher, he raiſed up *Abraham* to be a ſpecial and extraordinarie witneſs of the *True* GOD; none could boaſt of any favour from the *Gods* they Worſhipped, as *Abraham* could ſhew from his *GOD*, as particularly that of *getting a Son in his Old Age*, and when the Womb of his Wife too was become dead by the Courſe of Nature, which could not be effectuate by any other then an

Almighty

Almighty Power. And therefore it was evident that he was the True GOD who did all this; and therefore also all to whom the knowledge of this came were oblidged to own the GOD of *Abraham.* And indeed we find that these *singular Providences*, which followed *Abraham* and his Family, did draw a Confession from these Strangers with whom they lived, that it *was the true GOD whom they feared.* See *Gen.* 12. 17. 14. 20 20 3, 17. and *chap.* 26. *v.* 28. We have *Abimelech* confessing that the *true GOD* was with *Isaac*, and upon that account desiring a Covenant to be made betwixt them; *We saw*, saith he, *certainly that the LORD was with thee; and he said let there be now an Oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee; and let us make a Covenant with thee for thou art now the blessed of the Lord.* Nay such clear Testimonies were *Abraham* and *Isaac* of the *true* GOD, that GOD himself useth them for the Conviction of *Jacob* at this time, for upon his first appearance he call'd himself *the Lord GOD of Abraham, and the GOD of Isaac*, as you may see, *v.* 13.

As GOD made use of *Abraham Isaac* and *Jacob* to be his *Witnesses* in their time, so he continued still to use their Posterity; for convincing the World of the vanity of their Gods, which were generally worshipped

and to let them ſee that he was the *true GOD*, whom all ſhould ſerve and obey: For, for this end he wrought ſo many Wonders for them in *Egypt*, did ſo ſtrangely plague *Pharaoh* and his People, brought them forth with ſuch a *high hand*, and uſed many and ſo great Miracles in ſettling them in the *Land of Canaan*: For being the Fame of theſe things could not but reach to all Nations & People, ſo who ever heard and ſeriouſly conſidered theſe things, might be forced to confeſſe that he who did them, that is, *the GOD of Iſrael, was a great GOD, above all Gods, a GOD of Power and Majeſtie, that he was the true GOD, and that there was none beſides him.* What other but the *true* GOD, can command the Wind and the Sea, the Sun and the Stars, and all the Elements, and force them to obey his Word? Who can make Night and Day when he pleaſeth? who can change the *courſe of Nature?* and when he hath done ſo, can eaſily bring it back again? but he who is the *Author of Nature, and the Creator of all things, GOD bleſſed for ever.*

Wherefore the *God of Iſrael*, whoſe Mighty and Wonderful Acts are Recorded in the *holy Scripture*, is the *only true GOD*: And who would be found worſhippers of the *true GOD* muſt direct their worſhip to Him. All

who do not own and acknowledge him are *Idolaters*; for if they reject him, the *Gods* whom they ſerve and bow down to, are only falſe Gods, Vain Devices and Imaginations. Now who would be reckoned amongſt the Worſhippers of this *true* GOD, muſt teſtifie themſelves to be ſuch, firſt by owning theſe *ſpecial and particular Manifeſtations*, whereby he hath revealed and made himſelf known; For as theſe do certainly point out the *true GOD*, and make a diſtinction betwixt him and all falſe Gods deviſed by Men: So 'tis only Faith in theſe Manifeſtations, which muſt put the difference betwixt the worſhippers of *falſe Gods*, and uncertain *Deities*, and thoſe who do certainly adore the only *true GOD*. Hence it is that we find the *Servants of GOD*, when they ſpoke of Him, ſtyling him by theſe *particular manifeſtations*; and when they addreſſed themſelves to Him, having a ſpecial reſpect to *them*. Thus *Jacob* called GOD, the *GOD of his Father, and the fear of Iſaac*. Nay it ſeems evident that GOD would have himſelf named from theſe *things*, *and worſhipped under theſe deſignations*: for when he appeared again to *Jacob*, he called himſelf *the GOD of Bethel*, *where thou anointedſt the pillar*; *Gen.* 31. 13. and thereafter we find Him when

(when he required of *Jacob* the accompliſhment of this *Vow*) beſpeaking him thus, *Ariſe go up to Bethel, to dwel there, and make an Altar unto GOD, that appeared unto thee when thou fledſt from the face of Eſau thy Brother;* Gen. 35. 1. GOD's conſtant *Title* under the *Old Teſtament*, was, *that of the GOD of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob; GOD that brought the Children of Iſrael out of Egypt*; and they who own'd not theſe Titles were accounted *Strangers to the True GOD:* There is now another Name and Deſignation given to GOD, ſutable to the *Goſpel-diſpenſation, viz. The GOD and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST*; the Reaſon why GOD takes to Himſelf theſe Names and Titles, and will have himſelf acknowledged according to them, is becauſe they are particular Denominations, and do more directly lead to him. The Title of *Creator is due to GOD*, and can belong to none other: but they who have worſhipped *falſe gods*, have acknowledged a *Creator*; but who is the *true Creator of all things*, *is only owned and adored by thoſe who believe and receive the Revelation of the holy Scriptures.*

They who attend not to the *light of the Scriptures*, and reject their direction, if they own a *Deity*, it is onely a *Numen vagum*, *an unknown and uncertain God*, as

as the *Athenians* did. If GOD had never made any other *discoverie of himself*, then by this *outward and visible World*, then Men would have been only oblidged to worship the *Deity*, according to that *Manifestation:* But seing it hath pleased him to give *other Manifestations*, for the illustrating of his own glory, therefore it is Reasonable and Nereſſary, that these be acknowledged as well as the other, and that we adore him out of a respect to these *Superadded Revelations*, as well as out of a regard to the *Creation of the World.* And who do it not, are so far from owning the *True* GOD, that they oppose and set themselves against him. Thus certainly *Pagans*, and *Infidels*, and such as disbelieve the *holy Scripture of the Old and New Testament*, must be excluded from amongst *the Worshippers of the One True GOD.* Which I wish were more serionsly considered; for many Persons of this Age, content themselves with the belief of a *Deity*, and think they have gone a very great length, by acknowledging this, though they deny Faith to the *Gospel:* Who are not convinced, *By the Testimonies of Scripture*, are as much without excuse, as they who will not be perswaded there is a GOD, upon the evidence thereof, from the

existence

existence of other things, and the Wise and useful Order, and Harmonie, and Stedfastnes which is visible in the World: for the rolling over the *production* of this *material World* upon *blind chance*, the attributing it to a *various tossing* and *tumbling of Attoms*, without any Guide or Director, as was the dream of *Epicurus* and *Democritus*, would be no greater absurdity then to think that the Miracles and Propheſies, and other things narrated in *Scripture*, the *admirable correſpondence between the Old and New Teſtament*, and the *excellent Agreement* between the *Chriſtian Doctrine* and the *Nature* and *State of Man*, when truly conſidered ſhould not be of God, but only a cunningly deviſed fable. And as for the Truth of *Matters of Fact in Scripture*, there is as much evidence for them, as in *Reaſon* can be deſired, and they cannot be called in Queſtion, without overturning all *Humane certainty* every Man acts dayly in his *Civill affairs*, as much upon Truſt as he is obliedg'd to, by receiving and obeying the *Goſpel*; So that *Infidelity* is a moſt unreaſonable thing. And as it is unreaſonable ſo it averts a Man from GOD: *Who have an evil heart of unbelief depart from the living GOD*; as the *Apoſtle* inſinuateth, *Heb.* 3. 13. *Theiſme*, & *Atheiſme*, are ſomewhat of a kin together

ther, and he who is only a *Theist* may be very ſoon induced to be an *Atheiſt:* for though the *exiſtence of a Deity* may be learned by *Natural light*; yet without the *Revealed light of the Scriptures*, it is hard, if not impoſſible, to diſcuſs the doubts which may ariſe, from the conſideration of that unequal, and as it would ſeem, unjuſt diſpoſal of Men, beſides other things which may be inſtanced: And without the help of *Revelation*, all that can be known of GOD by meer *Nature*, will not be effectual to counterpoiſe the *corruption of our Natures*, and to reſtrain us from following *Senſual* and *Brutiſh appetites*, which being cheriſhed, drown all ſenſe of GOD, and caſt out all Fear and Regard for Him.

As Faith in the *Divine Revelations of the Scripture* is requiſite to qualifie us for being *Worſhippers of the True GOD:* So in the next place it is neceſſarie that we *adore the God-head* according to that *Incomprehenſible Myſterie of the Trinity. Reaſon* and *Scripture* both teach, *That there is but One True GOD*; For it is impoſſible there can be more then *One ſupreme Infinite Beeing:* But though Reaſon do not, yet *Scripture* doth declare, as plainly and clearly as it doth any thing, that in the *Unity of the God-head*, there are a *Trinity of the Per-*

ſons, viz. the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, each of which is propoſed to us as the due Object of all *Divine Adoration*; therefore who do not adore *all three*, and *all three* as *one God*, doth not adore the *true God*: For the *true* God, is this *Trinitie of Perſons*, as he hath plainly manifeſted Himſelf, and manifeſted it for this end, that he may be ſo worſhipped and acknowledged by men. That *the Trinitie* is not contained within that *Idea of God* which we have by *Nature*, will not excuſe the disbelief thereof, when clearly revealed, as I ſuppoſe every one will find who layeth aſide their prejudice. We are as much oblidged, to believe the *word of God*, as the dictats of our own Reaſon; and when Men will not believe *God's word*, becauſe their Reaſon cannot fathom the depth of it, nor eaſilie conceive the truth thereof, as in the *preſent caſe*, then they make an *Idol* of their Reaſon, and may be ſaid rather to adore it, then GOD: Seing they will not acknowledge him according to what he really is in himſelf, which he hath alſo plainlie declared, but according to the appearance of their *own Imaginations*. If the *nature* and *eſſence of God* agree with their *ſentiments*, they are very ready to own and acknowledge him; but if it differ in any thing from *theſe*, then they are *Stubborn* and *Refractory*:

Refractory: Which I may fitly compare, to thoſe who make a nice diſtinction betwixt the *name and Authority* of the *King*, and his *perſon*; the *King's Authority* they profeſs to regard as much as any, but however they are ſtill *Plotting* and *Rebelling* againſt His *Perſon*. If one ſhould take away *Omnipotency* from God, all would acknowledg *that it is not God reallie, but a fantome of his own deviſing*, which he pays worſhip too: For that is no God which is not *Omnipotent*. Now he doth the ſame who removes *Veracitie* from God: for *Truth* as properly belongs to him as *Power*: And therefore as the conſideration of God's *Omnipotencie* doth oblidge us, to believe that he can work not only above what we our ſelves can doe, but beyond our conception, for all things muſt be poſſible to him; ſo the conſideration of his *Veracity*, oblidgeth us no leſs to believe all to be true, which he ſpeaks and declares, though our *reaſon cannot comprehend it*. If God had pleaſed, he might have made the *myſtery* of the *Trinity*, and the other *Myſteries of the Goſpel* more intelligible; But then he would have wanted the homage, and acknowledgement which is due from our underſtandings, which the *Scripture* calls the *Obedience of Faith*, and which is no leſs *reaſonable then the obedience of the will and actions*: He who doth not ſub-

mit his will to the *laws of God*, cannot be ſaid to own him or his *Authority*; Neither he who refuſeth to yeeld *His judgement* to God to be informed by him: And the withdrawing the *ſubmiſſion* of our underſtandings will not be excuſed by paying *the obedience of our wills*; for *one duty*, will not make up the *breach of another*, which is as neceſſary of it ſelf. Hence it is that *Faith* is ſo much ſpoken of in *Scripture*, and made ſo *neceſſary a duty* to the being accounted *Righteous before God*, and therefore alſo it is that *Abraham* is propoſed for our Patern, *who againſt hope, believed in hope, for being not weak in Faith, he ſtaggered not at the Promiſe of God through unbelief: but was ſtrong in Faith, giving glory to God, being fully perſwaded that what he had Promiſed, he was able alſo to perform: and therefore it was imputed to him for righteouſneſs*, *Now*, ſaith the Scripture, *it was not written for his ſake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us alſo to whom it ſhall be imputed if we likewiſe believe.* By this rule *Socinians*, and *Quakers* will be cut off from the pretences of Worſhipping the true God; for as much Reaſon as the one ſets up for, and for as great *Pietie* as the other endeavours to make a ſhew of.

Thirdly

Thirdly that the True GOD may be our *GOD*, it is abſolutly neceſſarie that we pay all divine worſhip to *Him alone*, and not ſhare it among others *beſides him:* for ſeing there is but *One* GOD, therefore to have *more Objects of divine Worſhip*, is to be guilty of *Idolatrie*; and *Idolatrie* and the worſhip of the true GOD cannot agree together. It is certain, that GOD will not accept of their worſhip, who pay the ſame adoration to others beſides him: Therefore the *Firſt command* which He gave to his People of old, was this, *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods before ME.* Intimating thereby that the very foundation of true Religion, and the very firſt thing to be done in the Acknowledgment of the true *God*, is to reſolve *to Worſhip him only*, according to what our *Saviour* ſaith, *thou ſhalt Worſhip the LORD thy GOD and him only ſhalt thou ſerve*; *Matth* 4: 10. This *Joſhua* underſtood well, and laid plainly before the *Children of Iſrael*, in his laſt ſolemn ſpeech to them, wherein he endeavoured to reclaime them from Idolatrous practices, that is, the paying *divine reſpect* to any other beſides the True GOD, by ſhewing the abſurdity thereof, and its inconſiſtencie with the *Worſhip and ſervice of the true* GOD; for having bidden them chooſe whom they *would ſerve*, leſt they might

might have thought that they could well enough both ſerve Him who had done ſo much for them, and others beſides, he roundly tells them, *ye cannot ſerve the Lord, for he is an holy God, he is a Jealous God, He will not forgive your tranſgreſſions, nor your ſins, if ye foreſake the Lord and ſerve ſtrange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and conſume you after that he hath done you good.* And when the People expreſſed their reſolution to ſerve the LORD, that they might give a *true Teſtimonie* thereof he ſaid to them, *Now therefore put away the ſtrange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD GOD of Iſrael, Joſhua* 24.

Some perhaps will ſay that theſe *Paſſages of Scripture*, do only ſtrike againſt plurality of *gods*, or the *Worſhipping of falſe gods*, with a neglect or contempt of the *True*, or the Subſtituting any in his Room, but not at all againſt the *Worſhipping of Subordinate Beeings*, while one *Supreme LORD and GOD* the *Creator of all things* is owned and worſhipped. But to this it is anſwered, that certainly all is to be included in the *Prohibition*, which derogates from the *Glory of the True GOD*, and is inconſiſtent with the Worſhip and Service due to Him; and therefore among other things, this *of paying Divine Worſhip to any beſides:*

ſides: For who doth this, does not *Glorify GOD as GOD*, nor acknowledge that Infinit diſtance, which is betwixt him and all other Beeings. They are guilty of *Leſe-Majeſty* and commit Treaſon againſt the *Perſon* of GOD, who either level Him with others, or exalt others to *a parity with him*; and yet this is done when GOD is not Honoured above others, and that *Creatures* are honoured with all the *Acts of Worſhip*, and *Teſtimonies* of reſpect proper to the *Creator*. In the *Scripture* a *Covetous man* is called an *Idolater*, not that he ſets up his Money as an *Idol*, falls down before it, makes Prayers, and counts it his *Creator*, but becauſe it enhanceth his *Affections*, is the Ground of his *Confidence*; and that he cannot be more earneſt to *Pleaſe GOD*, then he is to *get Money* and keep it: Now is he not much more an *Idolater*, who deſignedly, and of ſet purpoſe, payes all that homage and Worſhip to others which he owes only to GOD; is not this to return to the *Idolatry* of the *Gentiles*; for *their Crime* was, that they *did ſervice unto them which by nature are no Gods*, as *St: Paul* tells us, *Gal.* 4.8. And in that he ſaith, *they did it when they knew not GOD*, it clearly implies that they who know him aright as the *Goſpel manifeſts* him, ought not to do it, otherwiſe they walk

walk contrary to the Goſpel, and diſhonour GOD.

To guard men againſt this crime, God hath in Scripture declar'd himſelf, a *Jealous God*; like a *Jealous Husband*, who cannot ſuffer with patience, the leaſt appearance of diſhoneſty in his wife, or any the leaſt inclination to ſtrange embraces. And indeed as a Woman would be guiltie of Adulterie, though ſhe did not quite abandon her husband, if ſhe did but proſtitute her ſelf to another, and entertain him with the affection and kindneſs due to her own husband: So they are guilty of *Spiritual whoredom* and *adulterie*, who honour with divine worſhip any beſides the *true God*; though they do not caſt him off. As the Husband is not content, unleſs he have his wife's whole heart and intire affection; ſo neither is God, unleſs thoſe who pretend to worſhip him, do it without reſerving any homage or ſervice for another. And as ſhe comes at laſt to have her heart wholly enſtranged from her husband, who hath been too familiar with another: So they who allow themſelves to perform *Divine Homage* and ſervice to creatures, are at laſt altogether alienated from the Creator, when men are drawn, to worſhip any other then God, they prove wholly forget-

full

full of him; they let thoſe whom they intended at firſt only to be *Co-partners* to turn abſolut *Proprietors* of their hearts and ſervice. Wherefore who would take the Lord to be their God, muſt reſolve to devote themſelves intirely to him, and *to have none other beſide him.*

Laſtly, who would worſhip the *true GOD*, and have their ſervice find acceptance with him, as they muſt not diſhonour God by giving him *Co-partners*; ſo they muſt not make their adreſs to him, by the means of Images or ſuch ſenſible or external objects, but muſt direct their worſhip immediatly to God himſelf, without application to any other thing for the *conveyance of their worſhip*; for this he hath expreſly forbidden, and that worſhip which he hath forbidden and declared his displeaſure with, can never be ſaid to terminate in him, That He hath forbidden it, is evident from *the ſecond Commandement*, where all ſort of *ſimilitude* and *reſemblances* are diſcharged: And that there is forbidden, not only *Images* and *ſimilitudes* deſign'd for honour of *falſe Gods*, but even alſo ſuch as might be intended for the honour of the *true GOD*, appears clearly from *Deut:* 4.15. where *Moſes* ſaith, *take ye good heed unto your ſelves (for ye ſaw no manner of ſimilitude on the day the*

Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb out of the midſt of the fire) leaſt ye corrupt your ſelves and make you a graven image, the ſimilitude of any figure, the likeneſs of Male, or Female, the likeneſs of any beaſt that is on the Earth , the likeneſs of any winged foul that flieth in the Air, the likeneſs of any thing that creepeth on the Ground , the likeneſs of any Fiſh that is in the Waters beneath the earth, and leaſt thou lift thine eyes up to Heaven, and when thou ſeeſt the Sun , and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the Hoſt of Heaven , ſhould be driven to worſhip and ſerve them. In this paſſage not only *particular Reſemblances*, but all kinde of *ſimilitude* whatſoever with a deſign to worſhip it, is abſolutely forbidden: So that there is not the leaſt ſhadow of pretence, for the thinking *any* lawfull to be made uſe of. And that God not only prohibits the uſe and worſhip of *Images* themſelves , and for themſelves, that is to ſay, when the worſhip is made to terminat in the *Image* or materiall object it ſelf; but alſo when the ſame is uſed, as a means of honouring and worſhipping God, is clear both from the due conſideration of what hath been already ſaid, and likewiſe from the inſtances of the *Golden Calf* which *Aaron* made, and the *two Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*, which *Jeroboam* ſet up: For they who worſhipped theſe *Calves* were not ſo groſs

groſs as to terminate their worſhip in the *Calves* themſelves; but uſed only the *Calves*, to ſtir up their remembrance of the *true God*, and their devotion for him as appears by their ſaying, *theſe be thy Gods, O Iſrael which brought thee up out of land of Eygpt. Exod.* 32. 4. *1 Kings* 12: 28.

The reaſon why God diſcharg'd the worſhipping of him, by *Images* and *external Reſemblances*, or any kind of *viſible objects*, and which makes this ſtill unlawfull, is becauſe it is a very improper and diſagreable thing in it ſelf, and that which begets diſhonourable thoughts of God, and which ſeldom or never faileth to make men guilty of the groſſeſt *Idolatrie*. What an improper, and unſutable thing is it, to ſtudie to make him viſible who by nature cannot be ſeen; and by materiall and corruptible things, to repreſent him who is Spirituall and Incorruptible; nothing which we can make or fancie bears any proportion to God, neither hath any reſemblance of him; the glory of the beſt and chiefeſt creatures, is far below the glory of God; and therefore it would be but a diſhonouring of him to *Reſemble* him to them, or to ſet up them as *Images* of him. *To whom*, ſaith the *Prophet*, *will ye liken GOD, or what likeneſs will ye compare*

unto him? Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and metted out the Heaven with his span, and comprehended the dust of the Earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a Ballance. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the Inhabitants thereof are before him as grashoppers, he stretcheth out the Heavens as a Curtain, and spreadeth them as a tent to dwell in. By what figures and similitudes then can he be represented? As St. *Paul* saith, *we ought not to think that the God-head is like unto Gold or Silver, or Stone, graven by Art and Mans device.* And as there is no truth in these resemblances which men make of GOD, so by making them they dishonour GOD, and occasion people to intertain mean and dishonourable thoughts of Him: they who set up visible representations of the Deity are said to have *changed the Glory of the Incorruptible* GOD; and thereby also the true dread of God, came to be taken away from among men. For by the meanness and foolishness of Images, men came to despise the Deity which they represented; as some of the wiser and sober Heathens have observed. Farther the use of Images is attended with the grossest Idolatrie; For who are accustom'd to Worship them, fancie something of Divinity in them, for they think

think good luck attends them, and that it bods ill when they want them; as appears by *Micah's* ſpeech, to thoſe who ſtole away his *Images*, *ye have taken away my Gods which I made, and what have I more?* But though one ſhould never be ſo Cautious in the uſe of *Images*, and guard never ſo well againſt theſe abuſes of them, yet certainly it is not lawfull to have them with a *Deſign* to Worſhip them, ſeing GOD hath expreſly forbidden it, and that he hath declared he will not own that Worſhip, which is given in and by an Image or any viſible form and repreſentation.

Now by the two laſt Particulars, it doth eaſily appear how corrupt the *Church of Rome* is, and how much guilty of *Idolatry*, for though that *Church* profeſs the knowledge of the One *true* GOD, yet *She* both hath *other Gods* beſides whom She Worſhippeth, and alſo Worſhipped the True GOD for the moſt part in that way which he hath expreſly diſcharg'd, and which by his word we are aſſured he will not own. Firſt the *Church of Rome* holdeth other GODS beſides the True, for *I* may well call theſe *People's Gods*, to whom they pay'd Divine Homage and Worſhip: And ſo *Angels*, the Bleſſed *Virgin*, and other departed *Saints*, Crucifixes

Crucifixes, *Images*, the *Hoſt*, or conſecrated *Bread*, and other Reliques are *Gods* to the *Papiſts*; for they pay to them *D*ivine worſhip and *S*ervice, even all that is uſual to be payed to the true GOD himſelf, they fall down before them, make Prayers and Vows unto them, *S*acrifice and burn *I*ncenſe, build Temples, and keep Feſtivals in honour of them, and in a Word, there is ſcarce any Teſtimonie of reſpect payed to *GOD* himſelf, which is not alſo given to them; and the ſervice of theſe is very little, if any thing different from the ſervice of GOD. Certainly ſome few ſubtile Diſtinctions, which of late they have ſet up will not put any eſſentiall difference betwixt the Worſhip of *GOD*, and the Worſhip of theſe other perſons and things, ſo long as they are the ſame upon the matter. Nay though *I* ſhould ſay that they ſerved theſe more then *GOD*, I would not calumniat them, *I* would but ſpeak the truth; For they pray oftner to the *S*aints, particularlie to the Virgin *Mary*, then they do to GOD; She hath ten *Aves* for a every *Pater Noſter*; there be more Temples built to Her and the other Saints, and many more dayes kept to their Memory, then what are conſecrat for the Honour of GOD; their Altars and *S*hrines

are

are more frequented, and greater offerings made at them; and by many inſtances it might be made appear, that greater Priviledges, as *I*ndulgences, &c: are beſtowed by the Pope, for their devotion to the Virgin and other *S*aints, then for the acknowledgement of GOD and of JESUS CHRIST. Thus what *St. Paul* ſaid of the *Gentiles*, is applicable to them, even that *they Worſhip and ſerve the creature, more then the Creator, who is Bleſſed for ever.*

Theſe practiſes are ſo palpably *I*dolatrous, ſo contrary to GOD*S* word, and ſo inconſiſtant with the honour and worſhip due to Almighty *GOD*, that it is a Wonder indeed how men who pretend to Learning and Reaſon ſhould go about to excuſe them; They are ſo groſs, that the very Ignorant *Vulgar* could diſcern them, if they were allowed the uſe of the Light: But alas poor People! they are therefore Induſtrionſly keept in the dark, and the word of *GOD* is hid from them, which would teach them the Haynous abomination of theſe things, and how highly diſpleaſing they are to *GOD*.

How little theſe Practiſes of the Papiſts, in Worſhipping of Angels, the Virgin *Mary*, departed *S*aints, &c: are to be juſtified, yea how much to be abominated will

will presenty appear by considering the ground they are built on, and the reason pretended for the defence of them.

First, That whereon all *Saints* and *Angel-Worship* is founded, is the *Supposition* that they are *Agents, and Mediatours* betwixt *GOD* and Man, by whose moyen and Meanes, both *Temporal* and *Spiritual good things* are dispensed: Remove but this *supposition*, and the whole frame of this Service will fall and prove an idle ridiculous foppery. Now as to this, first we say it is the same pretence which the *Heathens* made, for the Worshipping of their severall Deities, as doth clearly appear from their Writings; for we must not think, that they believed all whom they Worshipped to be *Gods*, in the strictest sense of the word: No indeed, they believed but *One Supreme LORD, One real GOD, who created and ruled all*, whom therefore they called the *Father of Gods and Men.* But besides him, they held several others, to whom they gave the name of *Gods*, not that they thought them *Uncreated* and not *Subordinat* to the great *GOD*; but because they were superiour to Man by their Nature, and made use of by the Great GOD, in the Government of the world, and the disposal of Humane Affairs. Not having right apprehensions

henſions of the *infinite nature of GOD*, they thought that he either could not, or that it was below him, to ſuperintend all things himſelf; but that he did all things by the intercourſe of theſe *Inferiour Deities*, to each of whom they aſſign'd *Particular offices*; giving to one the charge of the Earth, to another the Sea, to a third Fire; ſome they appointed to be the Guardians of Cities, and whole Countreys, others of particular Men, and ſome were ſet over Beaſts, in a word, there was no Art, nor Trade, nor Diſeaſe incident to Man or Beaſt, nor Paſſion, nor Vertue, nor Vice, which they did not commit to the overſight of ſome *Deitie* or other, which they failed not to invock, according to their various Conditions and Circumſtances. By this it appears, that the Opinion which the *Heathens* had of their *Deities*, was juſt ſuch which the *Papiſts* have of *Saints and Angels*, and that the One hath no other ground for the Worſhipping of *Saints and Angels*, then what the *other* pretended for the worſhipping of *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Minerva*, *Mars*, *Vulcan*, &c. theſe *Dij minorum gentium*, / theſe Gods of the lower rank & order. Neither can any thing be ſaid in defence of the one which may not be alledged for the other. And in truth, it would ſeem

that the *Romiſh Church* hath been ſo much in love, with that *ſcheme* of *Heathen Religion*, as to think fit to tranſcribe it wholly: for there be little difference in this point, except ſome change of Names, that whereas they Worſhipped formerly *Juno*, *Jupiter*, &c. Now ſome more Chriſtian names are ſet up to be adored. And though certainly the holy *Angels*, and ſome of the *Chriſtian Saints*, are by far preferable to the beſt of the *Heathniſh Deities*; yet it is no more lawfull to worſhip the One, then the other: for the doing either, is to *do ſervice to them who by nature are no Gods*, which the *Scripture* condemns, Gal. 4: 8: And which they who are thus worſhipped would abhore. If there were any communication betwixt us and the *Angels and Saints*, they would certainlie declare againſt the Worſhipping of them, and would ſhew themſelves ſo far from being gratified thereby, as to be highly diſpleaſed therewith. That the *Angels* would forbid it, we have good reaſon to believe, ſeeing they have done it when occaſion offered; for when *St Iohn* was about to worſhip the *Angel*, who ſhewed him theſe things he ſets down in his *Revelation*, he withheld him, ſaying, *ſee thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-ſervant*. And if *Paul* and *Barnabas* returned

to

to the earth, they would no doubt as earneſtlie reſtrain men, from paying Divine homage to them, as they did once *the People of Lyſtra*, and that too for the ſame reaſon, even becauſe *they are Men of the like paſſions*; for though they be freed from ſin, and theſe frailties we are lyable to here, yet they are men ſtill, they are *Glorified* indeed, but not *Deified*, and therefore not proper Objects of Worſhip.

But to return and to ſpeak more particularly to this, which is pretended for the *Ground of Saint and Angel worſhip*. In the next place, we ſay it is a thing very *uncertain*, what *uſe God* makes of the *Angels* and *Saints*, what be their *charge*, and *office*, and what *imployments* they are put to. We read indeed in the Scriptures, that God hath ſometimes imployed *Angels*, in the affairs of his *Servants* here below: But whither he doth this always, whither each *Saint* or *Angel* hath a particular conſtant *imployment*, or what is the particular *imployment* of *each* of them, is not reveal'd; men can only gueſs at them, neither have they any rule to make their gueſſes probable, and therefore there is no reaſon to worſhip them or to make any adreſſes to them. For *Religious worſhip* and *ſervice*, ſhould ſtand upon better grounds, then meer con-

jectures, yea I may say idle and fantastick dreams. What Ground of assurance can be given that *Raphael* is appointed for *traveling*, St. *Roche* for the *Pox*, St. *Cornelis* for the *falling sickness*, St. *Loy* for *Horse diseases*, St. *Apollina* for the *tooth-ach*, and that the *Virgin Mary* can give all that either Soul or body needeth; *I* say what assurance have we of this? And if there be no assurance, (as certainly there is none,) what a foolish thing is it to make adresses to these *Saints*, for these favours which (for ought we know,) do not belong to them to give, but to other *Saints*, if to any at all; if men be desirous of the favours they seek, me thinks they should make application where they are sureſt to be had, that is, they should rather go to God then to *Saints* or *Angels*; for we are sure he hath all good to bestow, but what gifts are at their disposal, or whither any, is a thing we know not.

Thirdly, though all should be true that is alledged, that we receive *good things* from hands of *Saints* and *Angels*, and that they could procure us what we desire; yet this were no reall ground for worshipping them: For they are not the *Author* and *cause* of these things, which are thus supposed to come from them. *Do not erre, my beloved Brethren,* saith

ſaith St. *James*, *every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above*, and leaſt we ſhould miſtake him, and think he included *Angels* and *Saints*, he addeth, *and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning*, *James* 1. 17. *Saints* and *Angels* at the beſt, are but the *means* and *Inſtruments* of the *conveyance of God's bleſſings*, and therefore it is not reaſonable to worſhip them, as we worſhip God. If they ought to be honoured with *Divine worſhip*, becauſe God uſeth their *Miniſterie*, in bleſſing us with *Spiritual and Temporal benefits*; then for the ſame reaſon, a *Merchant* or *Sea-man* may adore the *Wind*, when its favourable; and every one may worſhip his *meat*, for by the uſe of our *Meat*, GOD gives us the Bleſſing of Life: and it will not caſt the Ballance, as to the being a *Ground* of paying *Divine Worſhip* to *Saints* and *Angels*, that they are *Intelligent Beeings*, underſtand what they do, and what good they do us, they do it with good-will; for if this were ſufficient then it ſhould be of as great force, for the Worſhipping of the *Paſtours of the Church*, or any other *Earthly men*, whom GOD raiſeth up to be the inſtruments of our *Temporal* or *Spirituall good*. The *Means* and *Inſtruments* ſhould indeed have a due reſpect, but

but it ſhould be far below what is payed to the *Author* and *main cauſe*; *Saints* and *Angels* indeed ought to be honoured and had in great eſteem, becauſe they ſtand alwayes near *GOD*, and are his *chief Servants*: But there is no Reaſon to equal then with *GOD*, by giving them the ſame homage, and paying them the ſame Acts of *Adoration* A great difference ſhould be put between the *Servant* and *his Lord*, *Miniſters of State* and the *Perſon of the King*, and ſo betwixt *GOD* and *Angels*, and *Saints*; Which alſo ſhewes the unſufficiencie of that other *Reaſon* and *Pretence*, which ſome make for the worſhipping of *Saints* and *Angels*, viz. That hereby they do Honour to GOD, for though GOD would have them Honoured, yet he would not have them Honoured as Himſelf.

2. Some of the *Papiſts*, are ſo ſenſible of the abſurditv of Worſhipping *Saints* and *Angels* directlie, that to take away the ſhame thereof, they ſtudy to put another face on theſe *acts of Adoration*, which they pay to *Saints* and *Angels*, telling us that they intend thereby no more, but to intreat the *Saints* and *Angels* to interceed with GOD for them, which may be as well done as the ſeeking of *Prayers* of thoſe upon Earth. To which it may be replyed, firſt, that what is alledg-

alledged is not true. 2. That it will not excuſe this worſhip nor free it from *Idolatry*.

Firſt, the thing alledg'd in the excuſe of *Saint and Angel-worſhip* is not true. For beſides the *building of Temples*, the *erecting of Altars*, *offering up to them Chriſt in the ſacrifice of the Maſs*, which without the moſt violent ſtretching cannot be interpret a deſiring them only to pray for them; I ſay, beſides this, there is nothing more evident, then that their Prayers to *Saints*, is put up in as expreſs terms, as they ſhould be to *GOD Almighty*; and it is impoſſible for any to addreſs themſelves to GOD, more humbly and devoutly then they doe, Particularlie to *B: Virgin*; or to ſpeak more highly of God, then they do of her; or to attribute more to the One, then to the Other; or to Petition the greateſt Graces in more plain and direct Terms, as appears from many Inſtances in that office of *B: M:* Authorized by *Pope Paul* 5. There She is called the *Queen of Heaven, the moſt Glorious Lady, which is exalted above the Heavens, and in that Hymn* which begins *Ave Maris ſtella*, they beſpeak her thus,

Hail you the Seas bright Star,
Who God's pure Mother are,

Offenders

Offenders bonds unbind,
Give light unto the Blind;
Our evils clean disband,
All good for us demand,
Do like a Mother bear
Our Prayers, up to His ear.
O ſingularly chaſte,
Whoſe meekneſs all ſurpaſt
Our ſins, from us exil'd,
Render us, chaſte and mild,
Grant that our life be pure, &c.

This as it is the ſenſe of *that Hymn*, ſo it is *their own Tranſlation*, as may be ſeen in that *Engliſh Manual of Prayers* Printed at *Edinburgh*, this year 1685. though it bear the name of *Paris*. See pag: 76. and leaſt the citation of *forreign or old Books* may be diſcredited, we ſhal produce ſome paſſages of this *Book* which is lately emitted by themſelves, and which the Curious may eaſily get a ſight of; pag: 81. in a Prayer to the *Virgin*, after very high *titles*, they pray, *be thou with me in all my troubles, and afflictions, and in the hour of my death receive, I beſeech thee, my Soul, and offer it to thy ſweet Son JESUS, that for thy ſake he may accept of it, and place it among the Quire of Celeſtial Spirits.* And page 85. in the *Hymn* Memento Rerum Conditor.

Bleſt

Bleſt Mary *pre-ordain'd to be*
Mother of Grace, and Clemency,
Defend us from our mortal foe
Receive us when from hence we goe.

And every where throughout the book they ſpeak to her, and of her, as if ſhe were a *Goddeſſe* in the ſtricteſt ſenſe. But not only they pray thus directlyto the *bleſſed Virgin*, but to *Angels* and other *Saints*, as may be ſeen there. The Prayer to the *Guardian Angel*, *is O Angel of God, to whoſe holy care I am committed by the Supernal Piety, illumnat, defend, and govern me this day in all my thoughts, words, and actions,* pag 18. *And as* they ſometimes bid the *Saints* only *pray for them*, ſo at other times they deſire GOD *to interceed with the Saints.* Thus, *O Lord we beſeech thee, that all thy Saints may every where help us, and while wee reverently celebrate their merits, we may feel their Patronages.* pag. 52. and pag. 108. they amply recommend their ſouls into the hands of the *Saints*, *Angels*, and *Patriarchs*, that not *only by their interceſſion but by their aſſiſtance they may be delivered from the Prince of darkneſſe, and from all dreadfull torments.*

And if they intended no more in the Worſhip of the *Virgin*, & other *Saints*, why was that

book condemn'd, which was *printed* at *Cullein* for the rectifying *these abuses*, which had crept in into the worship of the *Virgin Mary*, as if the *Author* had been guilty of *Impiety*, against the *Scriptures*, the *Virgin*, the *Saints*, &c. And on the other hand, why was the *book of F. GRASSET* allowed, and Authorized by the *Provincial*, and the *Arch-Bishop* of *Paris* to be published *Anno* 1679; wherein as an *Antidote* against the *poyson of the former*, all is re-establisht, which the *most shameless Adorers* of the *Virgin*, ever asserted; that *an Almighty power in Heaven and Earth belongs to her, that nothing is impossible to her, that she can save those who are ready to perish, that she comes to the Tribunal of God, not as a Servant to intreat her Lord, but as a Mother which may command Her Son*; pag. 28. Thus by what hath been said, and an hundred moe instances which might have been given, did we not fear to be tedious, it appears that the *Papists* do more, then *pray to the Saints, to pray for them*: And that this alledgance is meerly a *blind*, whereby they may the more easily deceive such as are not yet fully disposed to receive the whole *Saint-worship* in gross.

But 2*ly*, though this were true, it will not excuse, nor free those who thus worship *Saints* and *Angels* from *Idolatry*. 1. Because even

even this much cannot be done, without aſcribing to them the peculiar *properties* of God, as *Omnipreſence*, *Omniſcience* and the *knowledge of mens hearts and ſecret thoughts*. If the *Saints* do not, neither can hear us, its a vain thing to pray to them: and *they* cannot be ſuppoſed to hear the *prayers* which are put up *every where througout the World*, unleſs *they* be made *every where preſent*, or ſo *Omniſcient* as to know whatſoever is done or ſaid upon the earth: Which to ſay of them, is reallie to make them *Gods*, for the *Scripture* and *Reaſon* both appropriate theſe things to G O D only. *Thou even thou onely*, ſaith *Solomon*, *knowes the hearts of all the children of Men*; 1 Kings 8. 39: And it is *One* of the *proofs* we give of the *Deitie of CHRIST*, that he ſaith of himſelf, *I am he which ſearcheſt the reins and hearts*; Rev: 2. 23. Which would not be ſufficient, if any other could know theſe ſave *GOD* only. Therefore there is a great difference betwixt the praying to departed *Saints* in particular, and the ſeeking the aſſiſtance of *good mens prayers upon earth*: For there is a free entercourſe between us, and our fellow Chriſtians here; but there is no means of *Communication* with *departed Saints and Angels*, who by their Nature are *finite*, and ſo confined to

one particular place, which makes it a very Improper and Abſurd thing to call upon them every where. 2ly, the ſeeking the *Mediation* and *Interceſſion* of the *Saints* and *Angels* ſo much, , and the laying *ſtreſs* upon it, is *Idolatrie* in reſpect of CHRIST: For it is a robbing him of his *Prerogative*, and the cloathing others with it. It belongs to *CHRIST only*, to make *Interceſſion at the right hand of GOD*; for as *St paul* ſaith, *there is but One GOD, and One Mediatour, between GOD and men, the Man* CHRIST JESUS, 1. Tim. 2. 5. And it ſeems, *St Iohn* knew not any other, when he ſaid, *if any Man ſin, we have an Advocat with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous*; 1. Iohn 2. 1. He ſpeaks not of *many Advocats*, but of *One*, and that *One* to be neither *Saint* nor *Angel*; but JESUS CHRIST. It is an injurie therefore to him, and an Incroachment upon his *Office of Mediatourſhip*, which he hath purchaſed by his *Death* and *ſufferings*, to eſtabliſh *othir Mediatours & Intercefſours beſides him* And to ſay as they are frequently taught, accept *O moſt Gracious GOD, by the Prayers and Merits of the Bleſſed Virgin Mary, and of all Saints the office of our ſervice.* See pag. 88. of the forecited book.

Thus

Thus the *Ground* of *Saint* and *Angel-worſhip* the *pretences* for it, and *all* that can be ſaid in *excuſe* of it, are altogether frivolous and unſufficient, and will not free it from *Idolatry*. And as it is *down right Idolatry* in it ſelf, ſo by it the *worſhip of the true GOD* is ſhuffled aſide: For men run ſooner to *Saints* and *Angels*, then to God; and Pray more readily to the *B. Virgin*, then to *Jeſus Chriſt*, as if the *One* were of eaſier acceſs then the other; it is more ordinary for People, to commit themſelves and theirs to the *protection* and *guidance* of ſome *Saint*, then to the *providence of Almighty GOD*; and to bid *ſome* or *other Saint to be with them* in their journey, and the Management of any Buſineſs for to ſpeed them, then to Pray as *Jacob* doth *here*, that *GOD may be with them*. Wherefore if the *Pope* were as *true* to God and *Jeſus Chriſt*, as his *Vicar* and *Vicegerent* ſhould be, which are the titles he aſſumes to himſelf, he would take Care to Aboliſh that, which tends ſo much to the *diſhonour* of GOD, and which *eſtranges men ſo much from GOD*; eſpecially ſeing there is neither *precept* nor *example* for it, in all the *Scripture*. The *Kings deputie* is very unfaithfull, and ill worth his Truſt, who ſits and ſees *Cuſtoms* introduc'd, and keept up, which tend to the diſhonour of his *Maſter*, and are

like

like to juſtle him out of His *Throne.*

But leaving the *Worſhip of Saints and Angels*, we come in the next place, to conſider their *Worſhip of dumb Images, reliques,* & particularlie the *Croſs*, which hath not the grounds and pretences of the *former Worſhip.* They cannot ſay that they are *Mediatours* betwixt *God* and *them*, and that they may interceed in their behalf; and yet the worſhipping of them is injoyned by the *Councill* of *Trent*, defended by their *Doctours*, and dayly put in practiſe amongſt the People, which is ſo manifeſt that I need not ſtand now to prove it by inſtances. However I ſhall mention *One* concerning their *devotion* for the *wood of the Croſs*; On *Goodfriday*, the *Prieſt* in the time of ſervice, holds up a *Croſs*, and ſaith, *Ecce lignum Crucis, behold the wood of the Croſs*, and the *People* are taught to anſwer, *Venite adoremus, come let us worſhip*, and and ſo they pray to it, *O crux ave, ſpes unica hoc paſſionis tempore auge piis juſtitiam, reiſque da veniam; Hail thou Croſs, our only Hope at this time, increaſe the Righteouſneſs of the Godly, and grant pardon to the Guilty.* Leſt any think that the *Croſs* is uſed *figuratively for Him who was crucified on it*, the following words will remove that *ſuſpicion ſola digna fuiſti, ferre ſecli pretium; Thou only waſt worthy to bear the price,*

of

or Him who was the price of the World, In that *English Manual* (done at *Edinburgh*) there is a *particular Office* for the worshipping of the *Cross*, and one of the *Antiphony's*, is, *O venerable Cross, which hath brought Salvation to wretches, by what praise shall I extol thee, for that thou hast prepared the Heavenly Life.* Page 332. and the *general Letany* in that *Office*; is that *GOD would deliver them*, not *by CHRISTS Death, or Passion, or Crucifixion*, but by the *Sign of the Cross.* Thus as it is evident, that they worship *Images, &c.* so it will not be excused and justified, that they do it for the sake of what is represented by them; for as we formerly made appear, *God* hath absolutely discharged the use of such things in *His Service* & will not accept of any Worship or Honour tendred him thereby. The *Images* of GOD and CHRIST, should not be worshipped for themselves, for they are but *the work of Mens hands*; nor yet for their sake whom they represent, seing they have forbidden it: and the *Images of Saints* should far less be worshipped, seing it is not Lawfull to *Worship the Saints themselves*, as we have made out; and therefore the Homage which the *Papists* pay to *Images, Crucifixes, &c.* cannot be acquitted of *Idolatry*: How much the *Heathens* are accused of *Idolatry* in the *Scripture* for

for the *uſage* and *worſhipping of Images*, is known to all who read theſe *holy Books*? And if there was Reaſon to fix this Guilt upon the *Heathens*, there is no leſs Reaſon to leave it at the *Papiſts door*; ſeeing their uſe of *Images*, now is little or nothing different from the Cuſtoms and Practices of the *ancient Heathens*, as might be eaſily made appear, could we allow our ſelves to purſue every thing at full length. But as we ſaid of the *Saints and Angel-worſhip*, that it was nothing but a *tranſcript of the Heathen Demon Worſhip*; ſo who are pleaſed to compare them together, ſhall find the *Religious uſe* and *Obſervance* of *Images* among the *Papiſts*, to be a perfect imitation of the *Heathen Idol-Worſhip*: for as to their Matter whereof they are made, it is the ſame, to wit, *Stone*, *Wood*, *Braſs*, *Gold*, *Silver*, *&c.* as to their qualitie they are not different, both the one and the other being *dumb and ſenſeleſs*, *having mouths which ſpeak not*, *eyes which ſee not*, *and hands and feet*, *which can neither handle nor walk*. Nay in many places the *Images* honoured by the *Papiſts*, are the very ſame which the *Heathens* uſed, only the name is changed, thus it is ſaid, that in the *Vatican Church* at *Rome*, the *Image of Jupiter Capitolinus*, ſtands this day for St. *Peter*; onely they have taken away

away the *Thunder-bolt*, and inſtead thereof have put the *Keyes in his hand:* but it may be eaſily diſcerned to be *Jupiter*, becauſe of his *long thick and curl'd hair*, whereas all the other *Images of St. Peter* are made *bald.* And at *Bordeaux*, in the *Metrapolitan Church of St. Andrews*, an *Antick of Jupiter going up to Heaven upon an Eagle*, ſerved ſometimes to repreſent *Jeſus Chriſt aſcending up to the Heavens*; And who doubts, but the ſame thing may have happened in diverſe places? However the *Papiſts* agree with the *Heathens*, as to the Ceremonies and *externall Acts of Adoration* payed to *Images*; they cloathed, and decked and perfumed them; they kiſs'd them, proſtrated themſelves before them, burnt *Incenſe* and lighted Candles to them, and carried them in *Pompous proceſſions*, all which the *Papiſts* do: * yea ſome not only *Protеſtant-writers*, but of their own, undertake to prove, *that the Superſtition of the Heathens, never carried them ſo far towards the honouring of Images as the Papiſts have gone:* And certainly, nothing can be brought in defence of the *Papiſts*, which may not as well be alledged for the *Heathens:* Nay except ſome few *logical diſtinctions*, which prove very frivolous, all the *ſpecious pretexts* which the *Papiſts* make, for juſtifying their

See Jur: prej.cont. papiſme.

Practice, are to be found in the *Apologies* of the *Heathens*. Do the *Papists* say, *that their Worship terminats not in the Image it self, but is carried by it to what is thereby represented*? the *Heathens* said the same. Do the *Papists* say, *that they use Images only, to remember them of the Invisible objects of their Worship*? So did the *Heathen* as appears from *Maximus Tyrius*, and some others. Are the *Heathens* taxed with a gross conceit, *that the Gods inhabited their Images and that some divinity resided in them*? The *Papists* entertain the same fancy of theirs, at least a great part of the *Vulgar* do, else what means the high esteem of *one Image* of the same Person above another? Why are *tedious Pilgrimages* undertaken, to visit the *Images of the Virgin*, or some other *Saint* in such and such places, when the *Images* of the same *Saints* are every where? How comes it that *miracles*, the gifts of healing, *&c.* Are ascribed to *Images*, if they do not think that there be something of *Divinity* in them? Therefore the *Papists opinions and practices anent Images, are one and the same with the Heathens*, for which they are accounted *Idolaters* in *Scripture*: and consequently all *subtilties* of the *Roman Doctors*, will not free their *Church*, from this horrid and *provoking crime*. And as both reason and *Scripture* declare against them, so they

they cannot plead here the practice of the *Ancient Church*; for nothing is more manifeſt, then that the *Primitive Church* abſtained from the very appearance of this *Idolatry* and *Superſtition*, ſo far were they from practiſing it, witneſs that known Fact of *Epiphanius* Biſhop of *Salamine in Cyprus*, in tearing a Linnen cloath whereon the *Image of Chriſt* was painted, which he found in the *Church*, leſt it ſhould be an occaſion of *Idolatry* to the People, this was about the end of the *fourth Century*; And about the *ſixth*, *Serenus Biſhop of Maſſile* brake to pieces all the *Images of CHRIST and Saints*, which were in the City, fearing the People who were then Declining from the *Purity of the Chriſtian Religion*, ſhould be drawn to worſhip them. And that the worſhip of them, was not at that time *Publickly allowed*, nor brought into the Church, appears clearly from *Gregory the firſt* his Letter to the ſaid *Biſhop*, wherein he hath theſe words, that *thou didſt forbid Images to be Worſhipped, we praiſe altogether, but that thou brakeſt them we blame*; who would be further inſtructed in the Judgement of the *Fathers*, *in this point of Image-Worſhip*, let them read the *Engliſh Homilies*, where alſo they will clearly

ſee, the great Diſagrement betwixt the preſent *Church of Rome*, and the *Primitive Church* for hundreds of years, ſo little Reaſon have they to plead *Antiquity*.

But though all ſhould be admitted which the *Papiſts* ſay, for their Vindication in worſhipping *Angels, Saints and Images*; yet this would not free them altogether from *Idolatry* ſo long as they *Worſhip the Hoſt*, or *Conſecrated Bread*: For though there were no other Reaſon to tax them with this Crime, yet this were ſufficient, which we come now in the laſt place to ſpeak to; And the rather, becauſe they go not about to excuſe this, nor do they collour it with *ſubtile Gloſſes*, as in former Inſtances: they do not cry out, that they are wrong'd and calumniat, when they are ſaid to *worſhip the Hoſt*, for they publickly allow it, and the *Council of Trent* hath pronounced an *Anathema* upon all who do not think the ſame Worſhip due to GOD, ought to be payed to this *Sacramental Bread*. That whereon the *worſhip of the Hoſt* is founded, is the *Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation*, or a *total Converſion of the Bread into the Body and Blood of the Lord* JESUS CHRIST; and therefore if this Doctrine be taken away, or ſhew'd unſufficient it will clearly appear, that they are guilty of *Idolatry*, as ſome of them-

themſelves plainly acknowledge.

Now as to the *Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation*, it cannot be expected that we ſhould here treat of it fully and particularly, for this would carrie us too far from the deſign of this Preſent Treatiſe, and make it ſwell too bigg. All we ſhall ſay at preſent, is that there is no *Evidence* for it, no Ground to believe it, and conſequently no Reaſon for eſtabliſhing this Worſhip, which they make to follow upon it. If we examine the ſeveral ways, by which we come to know and to be aſſured of any thing; it will eaſily appear that there is no Evidence for *Tranſubſtantiation*, no Ground to believe that the *Hoſt* is the *real Body and Blood of* JESUS CHRIST. All things are Manifeſt to us, either by *Senſe*, or *Reaſon*, or *Revelation*, and what appears by none of theſe, is a groundleſs conceit, a *Fantaſtick Opinion*, which ought not be made the *Foundation of any Religious obſervance*, and ſuch will the *Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation* be found to be: For firſt if we examine our *Senſes*, and believe their Teſtimonie: there is no *Tranſubſtantiation*, but the *Bread* continues *Bread* after *conſecration*; the *Figure*, *Shape*, *Cllour*, *ſmell* and *Taſte*, are the ſame were before; and if it be keept any while it moulds and corrupts as

Bread

Bread, ſo that to the appearance of Senſe there is nothing but Bread. And if we have recourſe to Reaſon, it will not contradict, but confirm the *Teſtimony of our Senſe*: And farther ſhew what an abſurdity it is to think other wayes: becauſe it would, quite deſtroy the *Nature* and *Properties of Bodies*, if the *Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST* were in the *Hoſt*; For then it would follow that one body might be in *Diverſe places at once*, that Matter might be without Extenſion, that the Accidents, Effects and Properties of a Body may remain when the Body it ſelf is deſtroyed, and ſuch like abſurdities; Thus *Tranſubſtantiation* is founded, neither upon Senſe nor Reaſon but is contrare to both. And therefore if there be any ſuch thing, it muſt appear by *Revelation*, but it will appear as little this way, as any other: for there is no *Revelation* to be truſted, but what is ſet down in the *Scripture*, and they are altogether ſilent. What ever was the occaſion of this Doctrine, ſure the *Scripture* was not, for it is not plainly aſſerted, nor is it to be deduced from clear or *Poſitive Truths*. Nay the *Scripture* gives ſo little ground to fancie this, that on the contrarie, it ſpeak ſo of this *Sacrament* as may aſſure us there is no ſuch thing as the *Papiſts* dream: for

for it calls it *Bread*, both before and after its *Conſecration*, and the uſuall *Phraſe* for the *celebration* of this *Sacrament*, is in *Scripture*, *the breaking of Bread*, which would have been a very mean expreſſion if the Bread were turned to the *Body of* JESUS CHRIST. The pretext for *Tranſubſtantiation*, from *Scripture*, are theſe words, *this is my Body*, which in Truth when conſidered are no Pretext at all; becauſe none but ſuch as are Prepoſſeſt with the Fancy, could underſtand that to be the Meaning of them: ſuch a *Myſtery* and Miracle as *Tranſubſtantiation* is, had need to have been aſſerted more plainly and clearly, that is to ſay in *Terms* which do more neceſſarly import it. The *Diſciples* who uſed frequently to trouble our LORD, about the meaning of His Words, and to raiſe Scruples when he ſpoke of things far more Credible, it is not likely that they would have let this go, if they had underſtood him as the *Papiſts* do; if they had ſo taken him up, as to think that he ſaid, what He *Reached*, and what they Received, and Eat, was not real *Bread*, but that *ſame real Body* which was before their eyes, they would no doubt enquired farther into the matter, and asked how ſuch a thing could be. But having a little before, in the *Celebration*

lebration of the Paſſover, heard our LORD ſay of the *unleavened Bread*, according to the *Iewiſh cuſtom*, *this is the Bread of Affliction which our Fathers eat in Egypt*, they could not underſtand the Bread now diſtribut, to be his *Body* otherways, then the *unleavened Bread* was the *Bread which their Fathers eat in Egypt*, to wit, not the ſame reallie, but only the *Symbol* or *Memorial* thereof.

Thus it appears that the *Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation*, is a meer groundleſs Conceit, favoured neither by Senſe, nor by Reaſon, nor *Scripture*, but flatly oppoſed by all of them: And ſo though the *Bread* in the *Sacrament*, be Conſecrat to an *Holy uſe*, and though it ſerve for *Holy ends* and *Purpoſes*, yet as to its Nature and Subſtance it is ſtill *Bread*, and therefore who worſhip it, worſhip not GOD, but a *Creature*, and a *dumb Senſeleſs Creature* of it ſelf too, which is as groſs *Idolatry* as any can be. Neither will it excuſe them, that they think it to be him who is their GOD: for then all *Idolatry* ſhould be excuſable, he who Worſhips the *Sun* ſhould be excuſed if he fancied a *Deitie* therein; Mens Opinions will not alter the Nature of things, nor make that Juſtifiable which is of it ſelf Damnable, otherways the greateſt Crimes may prove no Crimes. Nor will

will it acquit the *Papists* of *Idolatry* in worshipping the *Host*, that they intend therein to worship JESUS CHRIST, seing their Worship is directed immediatly to another thing; otherwayes the *Israelites*, who worshipped the *Golden calf*, might upon the same account be freed of *Idolatry*. And yet the *Papists* in worshipping the *Sacramental Bread*, are more gross then the *Israelites* in worshipping the *Golden calf*: For they made not the *Calf* their GOD, neither did they terminat their worship in the *Calf it self*, but used it only as the means of conveying their Worship to the *true GOD*. Whereas the *Papists* believe the *Bread* in the *Sacrament*, to be the very *LORD JESUS CHRIST himself*, and do terminat their Worship in the very *Sacrament it self*. Then which I hardly think there can be a grosser instance of *Idolatry* produced from among the *Heathens* whither *Ancient* or *Modern*: "It "saith *Coster*, a *Popish-Writter*, *the* See *Stil-* "*Doctrine of Transubstantiation be not ling:* "*true*, *the Idolatry of the* Heathens Idolat: "*in Worshipping some Golden* or *Silver* "*statue*, *or any Image of their Gods*, *or the* "Laplanders *Worshipping a red cloath*, *or the* "*Egyptians an Animal*, is more excusable "then *that* of *Christians Worshiping* a bit of

bread". And another of them ſaith, *that if there be nothing but bread in the Euchariſt, they are all Idolaters.* Thus they confeſs, that it is the *Suppoſition* of *Tranſubſtantiation* only, which can vindicat them from the *groſſeſt Idolatry:* but that there is no ſuch thing to be ſuppoſed, we have already proved, and they who will needs believe a thing not only without all ground, but contrarie to all Evidence of Senſe, Reaſon and *Scripture*, their Errour is wilfull, and neither is it to be excuſed, nor the Practiſes which they build thereupon to be Extenuated. And it will be to little purpoſe here, to have recourſe to the Fathers for the Defence of this Opinion; for firſt, we are not obliedged to believe any of them contrary to Senſe, Reaſon and *Scripture.* And ſecondly, it hath been frequently ſhewed that they ſay no ſuch thing, for untill about the *Eight* or *Ninth Century* this Opinion did not creep into the *Church*, it only entered in with the *Worſhip of Images*, for which among ſeveral others, ſee a *late diſcourſe of Tranſubſtantiation.*

But though there were ground for the *Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation*, and that CHRIST ſhould be really in the *Sacrament*, as the *Papiſts* imagine; yet according to their *Principles*, it is ſcarce poſſible, yea I may ſay altogether impoſſible, to know

certainly, or to have any assurance, when the *Bread* is truly *Transubstantiated*, or that *CHRIST* is *Really* in the *Sacrament:* and therefore who Adore it run alwayes the Hazard of committing the *grosest Idolatry*, which is the most *Heinous of Crimes.* According to the Principles of the *Romish Church*, there can be no *Transubstantiation*, if the *Elements* be not prepared of due matter, viz. The Bread of true Wheat, and the Wine of ripe Grapes, and neither of them any wayes spoiled or corrupted; if the *Priest* who Celebrats, be not a true *Priest*, that is to say, *Rightly ordained*, and according to them, a great many things are requisite to make ones Ordination valid, and it is not possible to know when they are wanting or when they are present, but thought he should be a *True Priest*, yet if he intend not seriously the *Consecration of the Sacrament*, or doth not pronounce the words, or doth not pronounce them right, but doth either mangle or transpose them, in all these cases, there is no *Transubstantiation*, neither is there any difference betwixt the *Elements of Bread and Wine* which seems to be consecrat, and *common Bread and Wine.* And therefore it is impossible to know, when the *Bread is Transubstantiated*, or when not, when CHRIST *is really*

preſent, and when he is abſent; for it is one to an hundred, but ſome one or other of theſe neceſſarie conditions of a right Conſecration is wanting; and therefore alſo who adore the *Sacrament*, can never be certain that they adore JESUS CHRIST really, but inſtead of him, may be paying Divine worſhip to a *meer creature*, to lifeleſs Bread and Wine, which may perplex the minds and conſciences of ſuch as ſeriouſly conſider the heinouſneſs of the crime of *Idolatry*. To evade this Difficultie, they tell us that *the Adoration of the Sacrament* is always with the ſuppoſition of *Chriſt's preſence*, that they adore the Bread upon this condition, that it is *the Body of JESUS CHRIST*: But this is a ſillie evaſion, and will never free their *Church* of *Idolatry*; for it is only *Doctours* or the Learned who may uſe theſe ſubtilties; as for the *Vulgar* they do not make any ſuch ſuppoſition, nor do they worſhip the *Sacrament* with any ſuch *ſalvo*. And beſides, both the One and the Other pay the ſame *Adoration* when it is no *Sacrament*, as when it is: for without any ſcruple, they worſhip alwayes and every where the *Bread* which is pretended to be *Conſecration*, when it is certain ſometimes, nay oftimes, it is not *Tranſubſtantiated into the Body and Blood of* JESUS CHRIST, becauſe of the want of thoſe neceſſary condition

ditions which infer that change. And when it is but *ſimple Bread*, will it take off the guilt of *Idolatry*, to ſay, *I worſhip thee if thou art* CHRIST? Which is, as if a *Woman* ſhould pretend to excuſe her *Adultery*, by ſaying when ſhe admitted a ſtranger, *I do this if thou art mine Husband.* A *woman* is not honeſt and faithfull, if ſhe embrace another upon light pretences and appearances; ſhe ſhould be alwayes certain, that he is her *real Husband* to whom ſhe payes the duty of a wife: in like manner, none are faithfull to God, who throw away the worſhip due to him only, upon uncertain objects. *He is a jealous GOD*, as jealous of his glory as any earthly *Husband* is of his honour, and therefore will never be pleaſed with us, if we worſhip *raſhly*, when we are not ſure that it is him we worſhip. Thus though it were granted, that the *Bread and Wine* ſhould be turned into the *Body and Bloud of Jeſus Chriſt*, yet ſeing it is ſo uncertain when it is *de facto* thus turned, it is much ſafer not to worſhip then to worſhip: becauſe there is no crime in not worſhipping, but by worſhipping we may run the hazard of *Idolatry*. No *King* would find fault with one that were blind or half blind, for not falling down and paying homage to him, when he were Ignorant of his preſence. But if ſuch a one,

one, upon presumption of the King's presence should prostrat himself before the empty *Chair of State*, or mistake a *Courteour* for the *King*, and accoast him with all the *Titles of Soveraignity*, and pay him all the respect proper to *Kings*, both he should render himself ridiculous in the sight of all, and also what he did would be altogether vain and unprofitable; for it would find no acceptance with the King, nay would very readily displease and incense him, because it would imply that the *Majesty* of the *King*, were as much to be seen in others as in himself. The *case* is the same in the *Sacrament* which any one may easily apply.

But lastly, we shall suppose in general, that the *doctrine of Transubstantiation* is true, and also in particular, that the *Sacrament it self* is duely consecrat, so that the *Bread and Wine is actually transubstantiated* into the *Body and Bloud of Jesus Christ*: yet it will not from hence follow, that the *Sacrament* is to be adored, for which there is neither precept nor example in all *Scripture*. *Our Saviour* did not enjoyn it himself, nor yet the *Apostles* after him, neither did they look upon themselves as obliged to this, for we read that at the first *institution of the Sacrament*, they received it in the *same manner* they did their other

ther *common Meals*. And we cannot conclude that the *Eucharist* ſhould or may be adored, becauſe it is ſaid, *this is my Body*, even underſtanding the words *literally*: for if this reaſon hold good, it would follow that all things might be adored. The *body of Jeſus Chriſt* is only the *object of adoration*, becauſe of its *union* with the *God-head*; wherefore if we may worſhip the *Sacrament*, becauſe it contains *that* which is *united to the divine nature*, we may and alſo ought to worſhip *every other thing* where the *eſſence* of God is; and therefore every *Stone*, and *Tree*, and *Animal*, all *Animat* and *Inanimat Creatures*, ſhould be worſhipped, for *God is in them all*. But to worſhip God *in* and *by* the *Creature* is flat *Idolatry*. God is not to be worſhipped with a *particular reverence* to any thing, but either when it is expreſly commanded, or when he ſheweth there *viſible rayes of Majeſty and Glory*, and even then we are not to worſhip the thing it ſelf, but God who ſheweth himſelf *thus preſent* at it, as the *Iſraelites* worſhipped not the *Ark*, but toward the *Ark*, and as *Moſes* worſhipped *God* who manifeſted himſelf in the *burning buſh*, but not the *buſh* it ſelf. But where *God* or *Chriſt* is not preſent by ſuch viſible *rayes of Majeſty*, there worſhip ſhould not be payed; we are ſure *Chriſt* dwelleth in all the *faithfull*, but I hope none

none will say, that *every believer* should be worshipped: so though Christ should be *really present* in the *Sacrament*, yet it will not follow that the *Elements* whereof it is constitute should be adored, no more then the *Manger wherein Christ lay*, or the *Cloaths* which covered his *Body* and therefore the *Papists* who adore the *Sacrament* it self, that which they *see, feel, and taste with their bodily senses*, they adore the *creature* with the *Creator*, and commit as *great absurdity*, that is to say, as *gross Idolatry*, as they who should have ador'd *Christ's garments*, as well as his person.

Thus whatever way we consider the *Sacrament*, and the *words of its institution*, whither we take them *Figuratively* (as certainly they should,) or even *Literally*, as the *Papists* would be at, it is clear that the *Sacrament* is no object of adoration, and they who religious adore it, *do service to that which by nature is no God*, which is down right *Idolatry*. And as the *Papists* are most unreasonable, in looking upon the *Sacrament as a due object of Adoration*, and by entertaining no less esteem of it then they do of JESUS CHRIST himself; so they commit grols absurdity, and are guilty of unaccountable stupidity in eating, chewing, and digesting; and consequently letting forth to the draught what

what they have ſuch a high Opinion of; to believe it to be no leſs then the *GOD* whom they ſhould adore, and yet at the ſame time to treat it thus ſeems moſt diſagreeable and inconſiſtant: For this is both to elevat and to depreſs it, to raiſe it as high as is poſſible; and at the ſame time to debaſe it as much as can be. Adoration is the higheſt honour which can be payed, but it ſpeaks out the greateſt contempt of a thing, to eat and devour it. Wherefore I think it would be very agreeable to the tenets of the *Romiſh Church*, that the *Pope* ſhould interpoſe his *Authority* to diſcharge people to treat the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* as they do *common food*, which is to put upon him the greateſt indignity. 'Tis true, *Chriſt* hath ſaid, *take eat this*, but that needs be no hinderance to the *Pope to enjoyn* the contrary, who pretends to have power to alter and diſpence with *Divine Commands*: *Chriſt* ſaid of the *Cup* too, *drink ye all of it*, and yet this hath not hindred the *Pope* to take it away from the People; and there cannot be alledg'd greater inconveniences in giving the *Cup*, then in giving the *Bread* to be eaten and chew'd. If the People ſaw the *Hoſt* only in the *Prieſts* hands, when it is elevat; their reſpect and eſteem thereto might be the more eaſily keept up: but nothing

may occaſion more the *vilifying* thereof, then the allowing them *Liberty* to uſe it as they do the moſt *Deſpicable* food. It is ſaid, *that GOD commanded the Iſraelites, to eat what was uſuallie adored in Egypt*, that the *Egyptians* thereby might be undeceived in their *Opinion of the Deity of theſe things*: And if it may convince one, that a thing is no God, when he ſees it eaten by another: how much more may he be reaſoned out of that Belief, when he is accuſtomed to eat it himſelf; For as the *Heathen Oratour* ſpeaks, *is any man ſo mad as to believe that which he eats to be God.* The *Church of Rome* therefore ſhould either let go the *Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation*, or they ſhould aboliſh the Cuſtome of Feeding upon what, they ſay and profeſs to believe, to be changed into the *Body of their LORD*: for *theſe two* ſeems not to agree well together. There can be nothing more brutiſh *then to adore what they eat, and to eat what they adore*, whereby they make themſelves and their Religion lyable to the *greateſt contempt* and Deriſion. A proof of which we have in that known ſpeech of *Averoes* the *Arabian Philoſopher*, *I have travelled*, ſays he, *over the World, and have found diverſe Sects, but ſo ſottiſh a Sect, or Law, I never found, as is the Sect of the Chriſtians*; *Becauſe with their own Teeth they*

they devour their God whom they Worſhip.

By *theſe Inſtances* which we have adduced, the *Idolatry* of the *Church of Rome*, doth clearly appear; it is evident that *that Church* both teacheth to adore as GOD what is not GOD, and alſo alloweth to have *Compartners* in the Worſhip of the True *GOD*: Which we have the longer inſiſted on, both becauſe it was pertinent to our ſubject, and alſo ſeaſonable to the times, when *Rome* is likelie to be ſo active by its *Emiſſaries*, to re-eſtabliſh its *Authority* among us, and that ſo many *fair* and *plauſible* things are pretended for the inclining Men to embrace its *principles* and *practices*: but whatever *ſpecious pretences* be uſed, we may ſee by what hath been ſaid, that there is all reaſon to avoid the *communion of that Church*, whoſe *communion cannot be keept, without drawing on our ſelves the guilt of Idolatry, and the having acceſſion thereto in others*.

Now that we may draw to a *Concluſion* of this *Section*; ſeing the Knowledge and Worſhip of the True GOD is ſo neceſſary, and that all Worſhip is in vain which is not particularly directed to Him, what matter of *Thankfulneſs* have we that our Lot hath been in *theſe Times*, and in theſe places where we may ſo eaſily come to the *Knowledge of the*

true GOD, and what way to *find acceptance in his ſight.* If we had been born in former Times, or in many other Places of the World, we might have remained for ever without the *true knowledge of GOD*, and ſo without all *Hopes of true Felicity.* It was once matter of Praiſe to a Poor-man, when he paſſed by a *Toad*, or ſome other *Venemous Creature*, that GOD had made him a Man, and not ſo *Vile a Beaſt:* But truly it ſhould ſtir up greater Thankfulneſs in us, that GOD hath not left us to wander after the Fooliſh and Ignorant Devices of our own Hearts, nor to be involved into the *Idolatrous Abominations* of ſuch as know not GOD, which ſhould have Deformed and Debaſed our Natures, and rendred us more ugly and loathſome in the ſight of GOD, then ſuch *Vile creatures* are in our ſight. Bleſſed be GOD, who hath ſent us the *Light of the Goſpel*, which hath diſpelled the Darkneſs of *Heatheniſh ſuperſtition and Idolatry*, and drawn us from the *Service of thoſe who by Nature are no gods*, which could have been no wayes Profitable to us, but many wayes Hurtfull. This is a Bleſſing for which we can never be enough Thankfull, and if we have a right Senſe thereof we will value it above all Bleſſings. Many *Heathens* and *Infidels* indeed enjoy

enjoy a *Pleaſanter* ſoil, their Countrey perhaps affoords them rich Mines of Gold and Silver, and aboundance of Wines and Spices, which we want: But yet we have no reaſon to envy them upon that account, or to think them happier then we, ſeing we have that which brings us better then a *Temporal Happineſs*, even *Eternal Life: for this is Life Eternal, that they might know thee, the only true GOD, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent; John* 17: 3.

Now if we look upon this Knowledge of the true GOD as any Happineſs, let us Praiſe and Highly eſteem it and teſtifie the ſame, firſt, by taking a care to get and to keep this Knowledge: for they ſlight and deſpiſe a thing who are careleſs of it, and readie to prefer any other thing to it. It might have been expected, that there ſhould have been no need, of *exhorting People to ſeek after the knowledge of GOD*; but that ere this time, every one both *Old* and *Young*, *Great* and *Small* would have abundantly known Him, ſeing we have ſo many good Occaſions of acquiring this Knowledge; But alas! the contrary is very much to be ſeen, our knowledge of God is not anſwerable to the means of inſtruction, we have amongſt us, ſome can give ſo little account

of

of what is known of God either by Nature or Revelation, that one might imagine they had been alwayes tedder'd in the *deserts of Arabia*, and not bred up in the *green Pastures of Brittain*. There is generally gross ignorance of God, and little desire to know him; every thing even the most trifling shufles aside, and diverts from the *knowledge of GOD*, and all things are hotly pursued except this, which (though People will not *avow it, yet*) do speak out a contempt and undervaluing thereof. The *Prophet* tells us, *that God had a controversie with Israel, because there was not knowledge of God in the Land*; *Hos*: 4: 1. and surely we have reason to think, that his controversie with us will be no lesse, seeing besides our lake of this knowledge, we do but despise it, in that we neither much desire it nor endeavour after it. God hath given *clear manifestations of himself*, but some will not believe them, and others are careless to be acquainted with them, *loving darkness rather then light*, which in Truth is to love their Misery, rather then their Happiness: For certainly this *inner darkness* of the Mind will bring on *outer and Eternall darkness*; who are without the *knowledge of God* here, shall be debarred *His presence hereafter*, especially considering that their *ignorance* is wilfull and without excuse.

2*ly*.

2ly. As we ought to ſhew our regard for, and *eſtimation of the True GOD*, by taking care to get and maintain the ſame, ſo likewiſe by *walking worthy of it*, in ſtudying to *Glorifie Him* whom we thus profeſs to know, otherwayes we ſhall but make our *guilt* and *condemnation* the greater. It will not avail us much to *profeſs GOD with our Mouths*, *if we deny him by our works*; *to acknowledge him with our tongues*, *but not with our deeds and actions*; if our knowledge of God doth not *lead* and *excite us* to the honouring of him, it will prove much to our hurt and dammage; as we may learn from, *Rom:* 1. where we ſee, *what plagues and judgements God gave them up to, who when they knew God, did not glorifie him as God, neither were thankful.* It is ſaid, *he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things which are not convenient, that they all might be damn'd who believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs*, as we have it; 2*Theſ:* 2. 12 Seing therefore we have found out the *True* GOD, and that he hath revealed himſelf to us, let us not ſlight or neglect him, and be careleſs to pleaſe him, But let us with all Readineſs and Cheerfulneſs, pay that Homage, Worſhip and Service which is due unto him. To ſhew which, was the *third Particular* we promiſed to ſpeak to, and

we

we ſhall treat thereof in the following *Sections.*

SECTION IV.

Shewing what Worſhip and Service is due to GOD, and how we may come to know the ſame.

THE Knowledge of this is moſt neceſſarie, for it is not enough that we find out who is the *True GOD*, unleſs we alſo own and acknowledge him, which is not done unleſs we pay him that *Homage and Worſhip which is due unto* Him: For as He is our *Maſter* whom we ſerve and Obey, and as He is our *Soveragin* to whom we ſwear Loyalty, and pay the *proper Acts of allegiance*, ſo He is our GOD to whom we give the *Worſhip* due to GOD, which can never be rightly performed, unleſs we know well what it is.

Now to find out this, we muſt proceed Warrily and take right Meaſures, otherways we cannot *chooſe but fall into groſs Miſtakes*, we ought not to follow at random, the Devices and Imaginations of our own Hearts; for what pleaſeth us may Diſpleaſe GOD, & be unſuitable to his *Majeſty*, and improper

proper for the advancing his *Honour and Glory*. Nor will it juſtifie and warrand any *way of Worſhipping* GOD, that the ſame is obſerved by others: for whither we *view* the *old*, or the *preſent World*, we ſhall find that the *generality of man-kind, have deviated much from the true way of worſhipping God*; they have ſet up *various forms of Religion and Worſhip*, which are not acceptable to God, becauſe in modelling theſe, they have ſtudied more their own ſeveral *humours* and *diſpoſitions*, then what was proper in it ſelf, or ſutable to the *Divine Majeſty*. Thus for example, the *manner* after which the *Heathens* worſhipped God, *was an abomination unto him*; for how could he who is a *ſpirit*, be but diſpleaſed with *empty outward ſhewes*, with *ſenſleſs inſignificant actions?* How could it but offend his *unſpoted puritie*, to be worſhipped by *debauchery*, and acts of *filthineſs* and *impurity*? How odious to his *infinite wiſdom*, that Fooliſh and ridiculous Geſtures ſhould be thought his Honour and delight? and how unſutable to his *goodneſs* and *mercy*, to be courted with Cruelty and Barbarity? As *Lucian* ſaith, *they rather deſerve the name of Impious then Religious, who think God takes pleaſure to be worſhipped after that manner*. The practices of the *Heathen* in their Worſhip, deſtroy the very *Idea of GOD*, and

chock these *Sentiments* of him which we have by *Nature:* for they were the occasion of these *Poetical fables*, which made their Gods guilty of *theft*, *murder*, *adultery*, *and the like vices*; which *Fables* were again necessarly keept up, that they might the better defend and support that Foolish and unreasonable Worship, which was so far from holding forth the *Glory of GOD*, that it did only serve to beget mean and unworthy thoughts of him.

The *practices of men* therefore, is a very uncertain rule to walk by, as well as our own *Fancy*; and seing men have differed about nothing more, then the *way and manner of worshipping GOD*, it would be a tedious task to examine their various sentiments. The *surest* and *neareſt way*, to be informed wherein the *true* and *acceptable Worship* of God consists, is to apply our selves to the consideration of the *Divine Nature*, and to search out his *will* and *pleasure concerning us:* for as when we are about to make *presents*, and to offer *gifts*, we do not so much consider what we our selves would be taken with, as what will be grateſull and acceptable to the *person* whose favour we are seeking; so *the worship of God* being design'd to please him, we ought no

not to ſeek therein the ſatisfaction of our own humors & inclinations, as what will find acceptance in his ſight. And nothing will find acceptance with him, but what is agreeable to his *Nature*, conform to his *will*, and which doth *properly* expreſs the *glory of his Attributes and perfections*; So none can ſhew us theſe things but God, and if he doe not declare them, we cannot be ſure not to erre: an expreſſe particular *Revelation* therefore is neceſſary to determine the *Worſhip* of God; for who beſides himſelf ſhould preſume to order it? It is our part to ſet about the *ſervice of God*, but it belongs to him only to preſcribe it.

'Tis true ſomething of *GOD'S mind and will*, and conſequently part of his *true Worſhip*, may be learn'd by *Natural light*; for the will of GOD is founded upon *his Nature*, which never varies, but is ſtill the ſame: Wherefore a due and ſerions conſideration, of the *Divine Nature and Attributes*, might bring us to the knowledge of His will, and of what is acceptable to him: the *Dictates* alſo of *Reaſon and Conſcience* being from GOD, they do teach us his Will. But though *Natural light* may thus teach us part, yet it can not ſhew *all that is neceſſary*; it is good and uſefull ſo far, and ought not to be ſlighted, but it

is not full or ſufficient, neither ſo very certain now, by Reaſon of *that darkneſſe* which Sin hath raiſed, which is too thick to be diſpelled by *Natural Light:* yea, Sin hath ſo mingled it ſelf with our very *Nature* and *Conſtitution*, that it is ſometimes difficult to diſtinguiſh betwixt the *Dictates of right Reaſon and Conſcience, and the erroneous ſentiments of that Sinfull contagion.* And farther, ſeing wee have not kept our *Firſt ſtate*, but are become *Sinners*, ſome other Homage and Worſhip is requiſite then if it had not been ſo: For it is not Reaſonable, to think *that ſuch as have offended GOD ſhould do no more*, then if they had ſtill retained their uprightneſſe; another acknowledgement is due from *Traitors and Rebels*, then from theſe who have been always *Loyal*, els it will not be accepted. But what Homage Sinners ſhould pay, or how they ſhould Addreſs themſelves to GOD, cannot be known, unleſſe he declare it: *Natural Reaſon* doth not teach this, for though it were cleared of its preſent incumbrances, it is only adapted to the State in which we were Created, that is a State of *Innocency*, and doth not ſerve to direct our behaviour if we fall from that ſtate. Thus it is evident that ſome *new Revelation* is neceſſary to be ſuperadded to *natural Light* both

both to confirm it and to ſupply its defects.

And what was thus neceſſary, GOD hath not withholden from Men; but as he made *Particular Manifeſtations* of himſelf to diſtinguiſh himſelf from the *Falſe Deities* which Men had deviſed, as was ſhewed above: So he hath given *expreſſe Revelation* of his Mind, concerning the way how he will be Worſhipped; that Men may not be to ſeeke herein, nor yet make an offer of what is *Abominable in his Sight.* The Worſhip of GOD is not now left to Mens *uncertain conjectures*, and unleſs they be Perverſe and Obſtinate, they need not perplex their Minds long with ſuch enquiries, *wherewith ſhall I come before the LORD, and bow my ſelf before the high GOD? Shall I come before him with burnt offering, with Calves of a year old;* if we be truely Serious we may ſoon come to a reſolution, for as *Micah* ſaith. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man what is good, and what the Lord do inquire of thee.* He hath given a ſure, plain, and fixed rule, which to uſe the words of *Moſes*, *is not hidden from thee neither is it far of, it is not in Heaven that thou ſhouldeſt ſay, who ſhal go up for us to learn and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and doe it. Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou ſhouldeſt ſay who ſhall go over the Sea for us, and bring it unto*

unto us, that we may hear it and do it; but the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest doe it; Deut: 30. 11.

The *holy Scriptures* of the *Old and New-Testament* are the Word of God, as is witnessed by the *Divine Testimonies, of Miracles, Prophecies*, and the like; which could only come from God: who ever also considers impartially and attentively the Matter of them, and Manner of expression, cannot but acknowledge they are of *Divine Inspiration.* For as to their *matter*, they both teach things not discernable by *naturall light*; and also the *dictates of human reason*, could not be so purely and with such evidence held forth by any *meer man*, sure all the writings of the *Philosophers* come farr short of them, even in this particular: and as to their *Style and expression* it is so fitted to teach men, and yet at the same time so becoming God, and so sutable to the divine Majesty, that the *Spirit of God* only could joyne these two together, and it is impossible for the Greatest Master of Eloquency to counterfeit them. So that there be *many evidences* of the *Scriptures* being from God, and as they are his word, so the *Designe* of them is to direct us in the *Worship of GOD*, and to prescribe *that Service* which is due to him, and will be accepted by

by him. Wherefore who would be informed of the *true Worship of GOD*, ought to consult these *Holy books*, especially the *N. T.* even *as a Subject* to know his *Devoir* to his *Soveragine*, would do best to consult the *publick acts and statutes of the Kingdom*; and who would Worship GOD acceptably must do it according to the direction of the *Scriptures*, as he who would shew himself a *Loyal and dutifull Subject*, must doe it by a careful observance of the *Laws* and *Statutes* of his *Prince*.

Some will be ready to ask here whither *any service* will be acceptable, besides what is enjoyned in the *Scripture*; which I shall study to answer plainly and in few words. First it is certain that it is not lawfull to exchange the *divine appointments* with our *own devices*; for nothing which we can doe will excuse the neglect of *Commanded duties*, nor will be received in compensation of them: we then truly adore GOD and own him, when we heartily and readily comply with his holy will and pleasure and as this will please him better then an *Ox*, or *Bullock*, that hath horns and hoofs, yea better then thousands of oblations and burnt offerings, so though we would doe never so much or so many things it would not please him if that were left undone

done, as Samuel ſaid to *Saul*, *hath the Lord as great pleaſure in Sacrifices and burnt offerings as in obeying the voice of the Lord; behold to obey is better then Sacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of Lambs*; 1 *Sam.* 15. 22.

Secondly, if we make the *acts of Religion* and *Devotion* which are of our own Deviſing of equall weight, and value with what is Commanded, they are *Abominable Superſtition.* But *Thirdly*, if theſe two be garded againſt, it cannot be ſaid to be unlawfull or diſpleaſing to GOD, to do things not expreſſely or particularly enjoined, eſpecially if the end and Reaſon of doing them, be mainly to help forward that *Service* which is enjoined. This matter will be farther cleared by the following Example, if *ſome Capricious and Conceited Perſon* ſhould either counteract or ſlight the *eſtabliſhed Statutes of the King*, and reſolve to expreſſe *His Loyalty* by new ways of his own, it is evident that he would not find acceptance with the *King*, though his aime be good: But on the other hand, if one duely obſerve the *King's lawes* and pay the *Homage* required, and moreover out of the greatneſs of his Affection will doe more or ſomething elſe, then what by the *Lawes* he is tyed to, the King will not be diſpleaſed with him, yea cannot but highly

favour

favour him. The very ſame may be ſaid to the *preſent queſtion*, only there is this difference, that all *humane laws* are imperfect, ſo that a Man may out-doe them, his *Actions* often may be better then the *Law*, by which he may pretend to merit at the *King's* hand: but *the Law of God* is moſt perfect and reacheth to all *things* good and *commendable* either in themſelves or in Order to other things; and none have Reaſon to plead Merit before GOD upon the account of any thing they doe, For their Actions which are commanded fall ſhort of the Perfection required, and if they do any thing not expreſly or particularly required, if it be Good or Uſefull any wiſe, it comes under ſome general Command, if it be not Good and Uſefull, it is but a vain and unreaſonable ſervice, which GOD doth not value or regard.

Thus having ſhewed, that GOD hath preſcrib'd *the Worſhip he would have in the holy Scriptures*, and that they do not worſhip in *an acceptable manner*, who do it not as they are there directed: It comes next to be conſidered, *what that Worſhip is which is there required, & by which we teſtify that we own the true GOD to be our God.* Now in diſcourſing hereof, we ſhall begin with that which indeed muſt

have the first place in our Addresses to God, *viz. Faith in Jesus Christ*, both as he is a *Mediator*, and a *Propitiation for sin*. Without this the *Scripture* tells us, *it is impossible to please God*; *Heb:* 11.6. And the reason thereof is clear, for seing we have offended God, and thereby made him our enemy, it is necessary that *our peace* be first made, before either *our Persons* or *Actions* can find Favour in his Eyes: and there can be no *peace* without the *Mediation* and *Intercession* of *some third Person*. When *Parties* treat together immediately by *themselves*, it speaks out an equality; and so t'would savour of great Arrogancy in us to presume to draw near of our selves, the *infinite distance* betwixt God and us, makes it absolutely necessary that there be some *Dayes-Man*; and not to acknowledge the necessity of *such an one* is to do *a dishonour to the Divine Majesty*. Nw *Jesus Christ* is a *Mediatour*, and there is *none other*, by him we have *accesse to God*, but without him there is none; *I am*, saith he, *the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by Me*; *John* 14. 6. *There is not Salvation*, saith *St. Peter*, *in any other, for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we must be saved. Acts* 4. 12 When ever therefore we present our selves before God, it ought to be *in the Name of Christ*, and

and all *our ſervices* ought to be tendred *in and by him*; according to that of St. *Paul*, *whatſoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, giving Thanks to God and the Father by Him. Col.* 3. 17. for what is not done thus by *Faith* in *Chriſt*, is rejected as the *addreſſes* of an *irreconciled enemy* which nauſeat and ſtir up wrath: all the Sacrifices and ſervices of *Unbelievers* are an abomination to God.

Therefore alſo, beſides *Faith in Chriſt* as *Mediatour*, we muſt draw near to God, by *Faith in him as the Sacrifice and great Propitiation for ſin:* for as the *Majeſty* of God requireth *that*, ſo the *juſtice* of God exacteth *this*; it being moſt juſt and Reaſonable that they who do a wrong, ſhould both acknowledge it, and make ſatisfaction for it, otherwiſe the *Injured Perſon* hath no reaſon to remit the wrong, or to take the *Partie offending* into favour. *Jeſus Chriſt* hath made *Satisfaction* for us, by ſubmitting Himſelf to the *death of the Croſs*, becauſe we could never have done it our ſelves but it remains neceſſary, that we *by Faith* give our aſſent to what *Chriſt* hath done *in our name*, and that *by Faith* we offer up unto God, *this death of Chriſt*, as that which is juſt and due to be payed unto him, for our offences and ſins; for without this, what *Chriſt* hath

done cannot be *imputed* to us, nor receiv'd as a *satisfaction for us*. For as in the *case of an affront*, when a *third Person*, understanding well all the *points of Honour*, is desirous to Reconcile the *Affronted* and Affronter, by drawing up *a writ*, in which there is an ample acknowledgement of *the fault* of the *one*, and a sufficient Reparation of *the honour* of the *other*; this *Writ* is only accepted and becomes satisfactory, when he who gives the affront subscribes it: but if he refuse to own and ratifie it, 'tis altogether void and null; neither is there any reparation of the honour of *Him* who is *injured*. It is Even so here, the *Death* of *Christ* is in it self a *sufficient atonement for sin*, and doeth truely repair the *Divine honour* and *Authority* which are affronted and injured by our sins: but it is not effectuall to make our peace with God, untill we *assent* thereto by *Faith*; for untill that be done there is no *actuall reparation* made by us, what *Christ* hath done is his own deed alone, and can be reckoned ours no manner of way, and so no more valid then the *Writ* in the *former case*, which the *offender* neither drew up, nor yet consented to after it was drawn up. Thus it appears, how necessary *Faith* is in our addresses to God; for as it is only for *Jesus his sake* and by *vertue of his blood*, that we have liberty

liberty to approach God, ſo it is only *Faith* in *Him* which makes him become our *Advocate*, and a *Propitiation for our ſins in particular*; Without *Faith* it is impoſſible to remove out of the way, the *wrath of God* due to *Sin*, and the approaches of *Unbeleevers* will but prove their confuſion and deſtruction.

But though *Faith* be neceſſary, yet it is not all that is neceſſary; it muſt indeed have the firſt place in our worſhip of GOD, and addreſſes to him; but after *the acknowledgement of Faith*, we ought to mind other things too, elſe we mangle the Service of GOD, and are very much wanting in that Worſhip which is due to him; As when a *King* to ſhew his clemency, hath *Indemnified rebellious and Diſobedient Subjects*, It is their duty not only to come and lay hold on the *Indemnity*, and to claime his *Protection* and *Favour* and *other Priviledges* only by Vertue thereof: But alſo to return to the *Loyalty* and *Obedience* of *good Subjects*, and to be carefull to manifeſt the ſame by ſuch proper acts and Services, as they have occaſion of. *So we are juſtified by faith, and have our peace with GOD through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; but this doth not abſolve us from paying to GOD, what his *Law* and the *Dignity* and *Excellency of his Nature* require of us; we are rather the more

oblidged to ſet about carefully, what was our duty before our revolt, and all theſe other ſervices, by which it may appear that we own and acknowledge *the LORD GOD.* Therefore though *Faith* makes our way to GOD, and rendreth our Actions acceptable to him, yet will not ſerve inſteed of all thoſe duties we owe him.

We muſt firſt *Reconcile* our ſelves to God *by Faith*, and then by proper and ſutable acts both of the *Inward* and *Outward Man*, endeavour to honour him, and to ſet forth the *Glory* which is *Due to his Name.* To worſhip in *the General* is nothing elſe but to *make an acknowledgement of ſome excellency in another:* Therefore the true worſhip of GOD, conſiſts in a ſerious ſenſe of what he is, and in giving proper & ſutable expreſſions thereof; and ſeing GOD is infinitly great, and powerfull, and wiſe, and good, &c: We are taught by *Reaſon and Scripture*, to fear and love him above all things, to truſt in him, depend upon him, to offer prayers and praiſes nnto him; for theſe Divine attributes of Power, Wiſdom, &c: are not otherwiſe glorified, nor can we any other way ſhew a ſenſe of them.

But ſeing GOD is not only *Power*, *Wiſdom*, *Goodneſs*, &c. but *our Maker*, *Preſerver*, and *the Author*

Author of all me have, therefore *a ready and chearfull Obedience is due to him*; And by this eſpecially we muſt *teſtify that we owne & acknowledge him.* What *Obligations* are on *Servants* to *obey* their *Maſters*, *Children* their *Parents*, *Subjects* their *King*, *the ſame* and *greater Obligations* are upon us to obey *God:* And ſo there is nothing more evident, then that we diſown and reject him from being our GOD, whom we refuſe to obey in any thing he commands. Now all the *Commands* of GOD may be reduced to *two ſorts.* Firſt, there be ſome whoſe reaſon is apparent to us, ſuch are thoſe which are diſcernable by *natural light*, and uſually called the *Moral law.* The obſervance whereof is required by the very *Order of Nature:* for if we act rationally we ought to follow this *Law* as cloſely, as *the Brute Creature* do their *Natural inſtinct.* But beſides the *commands* of this *firſt kind*, there be *others Meerly Arbitrary*, which God hath enjoined cheifly to hold out his *abſolute Soveraginity* over us, and to prove our Subjection to him; *Theſe Divines* ordinarly term *Poſitive Precepts*, and they are only known by *Revelation.* GOD never ſuffered Man to be without ſome command of *this Nature*, the *Iews* had many ſuch, but *Chriſtians* have few, and thoſe few too are made

made very ſerviceable to the *great ends of Religion*, the *perfection of our ſouls*, and *their Union with God.* How ever though 'twere otherwiſe, they ought to be obſerved, if we would have it appear, that we *ſerve* and *Worſhip* God: for if it be a *part* of *Divine Worſhip to own Gods Authority*, as we have made it appear, then we ought to obſerve *poſitive Precepts* as well as the *Duties of the Moral Law*; ſeing thereby we ſignifie a *true reſpect* to the *Authority of GOD*, becauſe there is no other Reaſon which induceth us to ſuch an Obſervance. Our *chief motive to the obedience of the Moral Law*, ſhould be the *Will and Authority of GOD*, otherwiſe it is no *Act of Religious worſhip:* but it cannot appear that our Obedience to that Law is for GOD, if we refuſe to *obſerve the poſitive Precepts of Scripture*; for that *Obedience* is no *true Obedience*, which conſider rather the *Reaſon of the thing* then the *authority* of the *Injoyner.*

Indeed if *Moral* and *poſitive Duties* come at any time in Competition together, then *theſe laſt* ſhould give place to *the firſt*; for this is the *Will of GOD* according to that *Rule*, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*; that is rather then Sacrifice. But when there is no ſuch Reaſon for ſuſpending them, it is a great ſin and contempt of GOD to ſlight or neglect

neglect them. It was *by the breach of a positive precept*, that our *first Parents* revolted from GOD, and which brought all *this Masse of Sin and Misery* upon *Mankind*; *Which* shews *Divine Authority* is affronted by small things as well as great, and that the *Wrath of GOD* may be provock'd by the neglect of *positive Commands* no lesse then of *What is Moral*. Wherefore they are grosely mistaken who think they are only concern'd to be what we call *Moral good Men*, and that it is little matter whither they observe the *positive Ordinances* of the *Scripture*. He is indeed no *true servant* of God, nor a *right Worshipper* of him, who is Vicious, and whose Conversation is not Honest and Righteous, for that is a *Weighty matter of the Law*: but neither can He be said to *Worship God*, who makes no Conscience of doing *these Acts of Religion*, which God hath been pleased *to enjoyne, to shew his Authority*, and to *try what regard we have thereto*. One may be *Chaste, Temperate, Just, Bountifull, &c:* Not for God's cause, but for his own, because 'tis agreeable to his Constitution, and for his Health, Interest, Reputation *&c:* but who is all these, & also carefull to expresse his *devotion, those otherwayes* which are *peculiar to the Scripture*, gives a true proof that he owns God and doeth what he doeth only for him.

Thus wee have given a *General View* of that *Worship and Service* which is *Due to GOD*. To condescend to *Particulars*, and to treat of them *Severally* would be a *tedious Taske*, who are desirous must be at the pains to gather them from the *Scripture*; and they may be much helped herein by that Excellent Book, *The whole Duty of Man*: But for the present we shall only speak *to one or two points*, which may help to a farther understanding of the *Nature of Gods Worship*.

SECTION V.

Of the Fear of GOD.

THAT we may shew more Particularlie, how and wherein GOD is to be Worshipped and Acknowledged, we shall instance, *first*, that of *Fear*. And here we shall not need to prove from *Scripture*, *that GOD should be feared*, it being so known and manifest a thing, that all who have ever *acknowledged* a *GOD*, have also *Acknowledged that he ought to be feared*; so that not only in *Scripture*, but even amongst all *Nations*, *all Religion and Divine Worship* is frequently expressed, by this one particular, the *Fear of the LORD*. And indeed it would be

be very ſtrange, if any ſhould think GOD *ought not to be Feared*; a greater *Parodox* was never vented among Men: *Fear ye not Me*, ſaith the *Lord*, *Will ye not tremble at my Preſence, which have placed the ſand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetuall decree that it cannot paſs it, and though the Waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevaile, though they roar yet can they not paſs over it.* *Jer* 5. 22. And again, as the ſame *Prophet* hath it, Chap. 10 6. 7. *Foraſmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord thou art great, thy Name is great in might, who would not fear thee, O King of Nations? For to thee doth it appertain*; yea it is a ſaying of that excellent *Roman Oratour*, *quis non timeat omnia providentem, & cogitantem, & animadvertentem, & omnia ad ſe pertinere putantem, curioſum & plenum negotii Deum:* That is, *who would not fear that GOD, who ſees and takes notice of all things, ſo carefull and full of buſineſs as to have a Particular concern for every Action and Perſon in the World.*

But as it is certain *that GOD is to be feared*, ſo by this we do not mean that *ſervile and ſlaviſh fear*, which makes Men only apprehenſive of the hurt and evil which GOD may do them, and which ſuch have who conſider GOD only as a *Being of great Might and Power*, which he uſeth Arbitrally, with-

out considering that his *Power* is alwayes managed by his *Wisdom*, and determined by his *Goodness*. This *Kind of Fear* ingendereth *Superstition*, and doth as oft avert a Man's mind From *GOD* as incline it to him; *Plutarch* observeth *in his Treatise of Superstition, that this ordinarly turneth to Atheism, and nourisheth it.* such was the *Fear of the Israelites*, when they saw the *Lightnings* and heard the *thunderings* from *Mount Sinai*, as we read *Exod.* 20. 18. for it is said there, *when the People saw these things, they removed and stood a far off, and they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.* It was *this fear* also, which possessed our *First* Parents after they had eaten the *forbidden fruit*, *they were afraid of God, and therefore they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the Garden*; *Gen.* 3. 8. Nay, the *Divels* themselves are seased with this *Fear*, *they also fear and tremble*, but by doing so they do not please God, nor find any acceptance with him.

The *True* and *Commendable fear of God* is what we call a *filial fear*, such a *fear as a Son carrieth to his Father*, whom he loveth dearly, a *fear* which breedeth *love* and *delight*, which makes a Man to rejoyce in God and glad that he is; whereas the *other fear* makes one wish there

there were no God, and is inconsistent with *love*, and doth fill one with *dread* and *horrour*: Of which kind of *Fear* it is that the *Apostle* speaketh, when he saith, *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment, he that feareth is not made perfect in love*; 1: John 4: 18.

This *true Fear of GOD*, is founded upon *his Nature*, and doth proceed from the right Knowledge of GOD, and a deep Sense of his *Glorious Attributes* and *Perfections*. Some say, *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion*, But it is quite contrarie; for the more one knows of GOD, and the greater apprehensions he hath of these *infinite excellencies* which are in him, the more he both *Fears* and *Loves Him*, and therefore it is we find that those to whom God *revealed himself most, did ever Fear him most*: *Abraham* and *Moses* seemed to have had GOD in greater reverence then all other Men, because they were most intimate with Him; and certainlie the *Angels in Heaven* do yet *Fear* him more then any the *most eminent Saint* upon Earth, because they see him more clearlie and know him more fully: For it is certain, the more ones worth and perfection is known it is alwayes the more valued and esteemed, and as there is no *Love* nor *Desire* of a good

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unknown, so it is a small regard which any can have to the Worth and Perfections which they are Ignorant off. Wherefore that we may be possessed with the *true fear of God*, it is necessary that we get the *right knowledge of Him*, we must learn what he is, and how great he is; we must furnish our minds with *true and proper notions of his Almighty Power, his unsearchable wisdom, his infinite goodness, his unspotted holiness, his admirable greatness, his unspeakable glory, his strict and severe justice, and his Soveraign Dominion over all things*; which made *David to* say, *my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements*; *Psal:* 119. 120. I say, we should labour to know these things, and should let them have a deep impression on our Spirits, and should ever bear the Sense of them about with us, or else we can never *truely fear God.*

And as this is the way to come *to* the *true fear of God*, so it expresseth it self alwayes in two things *viz.* 1. in reverence towards his *Name* and *Person*; & 2*ly.* in a care not to offend him.

First, if we *truly fear God*, we will *highly honour* and *reverence Him*, and that both *inwardly* and *outwardly*. *Inwardly*, by having him in a high Esteem, and thinking upon him alwayes with a holy regard and Humble Deference. When ever God comes into

to our mind, or that we preſent our ſelves before him, our Spirit ſhould be ſtruck into *fear* and *awe*; we ſhould lay aſide all Vanity and Lightneſs, and become Grave, *Serious*, and Compoſed, as is ſutable to ſo *High* and *Holy a preſence*. The ſerious Thoughts of God, ſhould make us ſtoop and humble our ſelves and be very ſubmiſſive; when we conſider God and his *Greatneſs*, we ſhould ſtrip our ſelves of all *Pride*, and *Self*-conceit and look upon our ſelves, and all things elſe as little and inconſiderable; yea as very nothing, for what elſe are we, or any Creature, nay all Creatures together when compared to God. *Behold*, ſaith the Prophet, *the Nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the Ballance: behold he taketh up the Iſles as a very little thing; All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him leſs then nothing, and vanity; he ſitteth upon the circle of the Earth and the inhabitants thereof are as Graſhoppers*; *Iſai:* 40, 15, 17, 22. They who are proud of themſelves, or big with conceit of any other thing, do either not know God or they doe little reflect upon him: for as the *leſſer Stars* diſappear when the *Sun* ariſeth; and as the *Diamond* doth obſcure with its brightneſs, the *Peeble, and counterfeit Stones*, when it is ſet beſide them, ſo certainly when God

God is ſeriouſly conſidered and thought upon, he will make all things appear ſmall and inconſiderable; the ſenſe of *his Greatneſs* and *Glory* will caſt a ſhadow upon the *Beautie*, *Luſtre*, & *Excellencie*, even of the beſt of other things. The *Right fear of GOD will not ſuffer him who hath it to be proud*, but doth alwayes fill him with low and mean thoughts of himſelf, and with a *high eſteem of God and greater reverence for him*; yea, alſo it maketh a Man to admire the leaſt *Act of Favour* and *Condeſcenſion* which cometh from GOD. Thus we find *Abraham* humbled himſelf when he talked with GOD, and ſhewed what a *high eſteem* he had of him, *behold*, ſaith he, *Now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the LORD, which am but duſt and aſhes*; Gen 18: 27. *Job* likewiſe when he had a clear *Sight of GOD*, he was baſe in his own eyes, *behold I am vain*, ſaith he, *what ſhall I anſwer thee, I will lay my hand upon my mouth:* And again, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes ſeeth thee, wherefore I abhorre my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes*; *Job* 40, 4: 42; 5. And when *David* had conſidered *the Heavens, the works of God's Fingers, the Moon, and the Stars*, and was drawn by them to the conſideration of of the greatneſs of the *Maker*, he preſently looks

looks down with contempt and disdain upon himself and all Mankind, and admires GOD'S *Goodness* unto them. *Lord, saith he, what is Man, that thou art mindfull of him, and the Son of man, that thou visitest him?* Psal. 8. 4. Thus it appears, that the *fear of God* doth alwayes make us to reverence and *esteem him highly in our minds*, and *thoughts*, and also to contemn and undervalue our selves, and all other things out of respect unto him.

But as we must thus *reverence God Inwardly*, by studying to have great & *worthy thoughts* of him, & mean & *low thoughts of our selves*, & all things besides for his cause, so we ought to shew reverence towards him *Outwardly*, by a *Grave and Humble deportment of the Outward man before him*: All *reverence of the Divine Majestie* must not be confined within us, it must sometimes appear without also, and certainly if there be much *Within*, there will something of it Kyth *Outwardly*. The *Inward Thoughts*, *Sentiments*, and *Inclinations* of the Soul, are always to be discerned by the *Outward behaviour*; and therefore if we *Inwardly fear GOD* and *reverence him*, we will discover it both by speaking alwayes of him with great Respect and Deference, and also by such Acts and Gestures of the Body when we set about his *Worship* or present our selves

before Him; as are proper to expreſs and ſpeak out the ſenſe of that *Infinite Diſtance* which is betwixt Him and us: And ſo we read that *Abraham*, and *Moſes*, and *David*, and all the *Prophets*, and *Servants of GOD* in the *Scripture*, uſed to *bow down* and *fall upon their Face to the Ground when they appeared before GOD*, or that he appeared unto them. Yea, GOD himſelf expreſly required this of *Moſes* and *Joſhua*, at theſe *Manifeſtations of his preſence unto them*, which we find, Exod. 3. 5. *Joſh* 5. 15. For there he commanded them, *to put off their ſhoes from off their feet*, which according to the cuſtom of the *Eaſtern Nations*, was then a Teſtimonie of Reſpect and Reverence. And indeed ſeing we bear no proportion to the *Greatneſs of God*, there is nothing more Proper or Reaſonable, then that we ſhould Reverence and *Exalt* him, by ſuch depreſſing of our ſelves and humbling of our *Bodies* in *his Sight*. The very *Angels*, theſe *Glorious Spirits*, are ſaid *to vail and cover their faces when they appear before God*; And how much more Reaſon is it, that we be abaſhed and humbled *who dwell in houſes of clay*, and *whoſe foundation is in the duſt*. Certainly if there be any Geſture or Poſture more humble then anoher, it becomes us to uſe it; and it doth beſpeak

beſpeak little *Reverence to* God, to uſe that Geſture and Carriage, when we ſpeak to him, or he ſpeaks to us, which we would not make uſe of, but when we were converſing with our *Equals*, or *Inferiours*. *Sitting therefore at Prayer*, and *having the head covered when Divine Worſhip is performed*, are very undecent and unbecoming things. I wonder how ever this creept in, or came to be in faſhion amongſt us; and I think it yet more ſtrange, that there ſhould be ſome who take upon them to defend that which is condemned not only by *the practice of all the Saints and Servants of God*, we read of in *Scripture*, but alſo by the *Cuſtome* of *all Nations* whatſoever: For even the very *Heathens*, would account it irreverence towards their *Falſe Gods*; which many *Chriſtians* in *this Country* are not aſhamed to do towards the *True and Living God*. What the *Lord* ſaith by the *Prophet Malachy*, in another caſe, will be very applicable here, *a Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Maſter, if then I be a Father, where is my honour, and if I be a Maſter where is my fear: offer this now unto thy Governour, will he be pleaſed with thee, or accept thy Perſon, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts?* Mal. 1. 6. 8. Nay, to paſs *Kings* and *Princes*, and thoſe of the *beſt quality*, even the *meaner ſort of Gentlemen*,

would look upon themselves, as affronted and uncivilly Treated, if they had not greater respect payed them, then what some shew to God: who would not be incens'd and provock'd, if his *Tennent* or *any other Poor mean Fellow* should thrust into his presence, without uncovering his Head, and sit down and talk with him? I doubt not but there are some, who would be ready to cause kick such *ill manner'd Persons*, to the doore; and I cannot see, how that can be reckoned as *reverence* and a sign of *devotion* to God, which men look upon as rudeness and incivility.

There be some which very much mistake that place of the *Prophet*, *Isai.* 29. 13. Where the *Lord* complains of his *People of Old*, *that they drew near Him with their Mouth, and that they honoured him with their lips*, as if that were a discharge of all *externall Worship* or of *outward reverence* therein: whereas it is not the *outward honour* and *reverence* which the Lord there finds fault with, but only *that their hearts were far from him:* God values not the *Body* without the *Soul*, for then it is but a dead Carcase; he cares not for our *outward reverence* and *Prostrations*, when the *inward Spirit of devotion is wanting*: but as he calls chiefly for the *Heart* and *Mind*, because it is the *better part of Man*; so he expects that having

having the *inward*, the *outward man* will follow: and indeed *what God hath joyned together should not be put asunder.* The *Apostle* enjoyns the *honouring of God outwardly* as well as *inwardly*, when he saith, *Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are Gods*; 1 *Cor:* 6. 20. 'Tis *true superstition* is a fault, but it is not the best way to redresse it, to turn *Profane* and *irreverent.* God is not pleased with the humblest postures of our bodies, when our hearts and souls do not accompany them: but to make up that want, we must not turn away from the *necessary* and *becoming testimonies of devotion* and *reverence*: What our *Saviour* laid on another occasion to the *Scribes* and *Pharises*, I may well apply here, *these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Matth:* 23. 23. As *hypocrisie* may be joyned to the *outward acts and expressions of humility and reverence*, so it is as certain that there is little *true sense of God within*, when the outward *behaviour* is not Grave, modest, and Humble: wherefore it is the *saying of One, I will as sure believe him temperat, who is staggering in the Streets with drink, and him chaste, whose eyes are full of Adultery, & him mercifull, whose hands are imbru'd in blood, as that he can truely fear God who sheweth no outward reverence in his worship.* The *outward reverence* of the Body, is not only necessary:

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to testifie the *inward respect of the mind*; but it is also requisite for the quickning and stiring it up: as the *outward Pomp* and *Grandeur* of *Princes* and *Magistrats* is necessary, to put *People* in mind of their *Power* and *Authority*, which otherwayes they would be readie to forget, or to be too bold with; so the *outward Humiliation of our Bodies*, serves to chesish and to keep up in us the *sense of God's greatness and Glory*, which otherwayes perhaps would slip out of our minds.

Thus we have spoken to that reverence both *Inward* and *Outward*, which is due to GOD, which is always *One of the fruits of his fear*. The *other effect thereof*, consists in a great *care and circumspection not to offend or displease him*: And indeed if this be wanting, there is no true *Fear of GOD*, nor will any Reverence which we shew towards him find acceptance with him. As *Children* who truly honour and respect their Parents, are always very loath to give them any manner of offence, and as they are grieved when at any time they chance to do it, though they do not *Fear* nor *apprehend to be chastised*; so such as are sincerly acted with the *Fear of GOD*, will carefully watch *against all manner of sin*, and will have an aversion from it, though there where no ground to dread Hell

Hell or other punishments; but even because that this is contrarie to him, whom they intirely love and honour: And when they have sinned, the consideration of the offence which is given GOD thereby, will afflict them more, then these bitter fruits which sin alwayes produceth. Therefore the *True fear of GOD*, doth alwayes restrain Men from doing these things that are *Evil in his sight*, and doth incline them to *that which is good, the fear of the LORD*, saith *the wise Man, is to hate evil*; Prov. 8. 13. And again, *by the fear of their Lod, men depart from evil.* Chap. 16. 6. This is a great *Aw-band* over men, & will crub them more then all humane Laws and Authority: For such as are possessed with the *Fear of GOD*, will not only forbear gross and open transgressions, which may make them lyable to punishment from Men: but even also as much as possible Secret and lesser Faults, which the World takes no notice off. Thus *Joseph* would not yeeld to the enticements of his *Mistress*, though perhaps he might have done it, without being in hazard of a discovery, for he feared GOD: *How shall I*, saith he, *do this great wickedness, and sin against GOD.* Gen. 39. 9. And when his *Brethren* were seased with *Panick fear* because of that rough and severe

ſevere countenance which he put on towards them, he encouraged them with this conſideration *that he feared GOD*, as it he had ſaid, *Though I have all power and Authority here in Egypt, yet you have no reaſon to be afraid of me, for I am not one who will abuſe my Authority, and wreſt my power to do Men hurt, and prejudice, for I fear GOD: Gen.* 42. 18. When Men are not very carefull to avoid ſin, and to do good, it is certain there is little or no *Fear of GOD* before their eyes, and they do in vain pretend it: How impertinent and unreaſonable a thing is it, to ſay, we *Fear that Perſon* whom we never ſtudy to pleaſe, & whom we are careleſs whither we offend or not? There cannot truly be greater ſigns and evidences of contempt and diſreſpect then this, and it is impoſſible that we ſhould both *Fear* and *Deſpiſe, Slight* and *Reverence* the ſame Perſon *at one and the ſame time.*

And hence it appears how little of the *true fear of God is in the World*, even among us who are called *Chriſtians*, ſeing there are ſo ſmall endeavours to pleaſe God, Nay ſuch a forwardneſs to diſpleaſe him, by doing theſe things which he hates and Abhors, and which he hath ſo often expreſly forbidden. It is a ſad, but a certain Truth, that the *Mogul* and *Cham of Tartar*, nay ſome of the

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Petty Indian Princes, are not only more honoured & feared by their own *proper Subjects*, but alſo may be ſaid to be had in greater Reverence by many *Chriſtians*, then the *true and everliving GOD* is: becauſe they do not ſlight them ſo much as they do Him, their laws they do not ſo often violat, their power and Authority they do not ſo frequently baſle and trample upon as they do Gods; and it is certain their name is not ſo much nor ſo often profaned and derided, as the Name of the Great GOD; for ſome, nay many both *Old* and *Young* amongſt us, are come to this now, that they cannot open their mouths without *prophaning the holy Name of God*, though he hath ſaid expreſly, *that he will not hold them guiltleſs who take his Name in vain.* Judge I pray you, if this be to *fear the Lord*, or if it be not rather to mock him, and to have him in Deriſion; for certainly though *Men* would ſet themſelves to affront Him, they could hardly do it more effectually; And is this then fair and equall dealing by ſuch as profeſs themſelves Friends and Servants? Did every *Nation* or *People* treat the God whom they worſhipped at this rate? Men have not cared to ſcorn and diſhonour *theſe Dieties*, whom they did not own, but was there ever ſuch a ſtrange and abſurd

thing as this? That People ſhould profeſs and acknowledge *One to be the true GOD*, and yet carry no reſpect towards him, neither ſhew any care to pleaſe him: but dayly and hourly live in the greateſt contempt of him. Theſe things are ſo unworthy and ſo inconſiſtant, that I neither know how any can excuſe them, nor can I find out any *ſimilitude* or *compariſon* proper and ſufficient, to ſet off the madneſs and unacountable abſurdity thereof. To convince Men hereof, I would ask them what they do mean by being thus careleſs to pleaſe God, and why they do ſo eaſily offend Him? Do they think Him ignorant of their Actings? Say they (as *Eliphaz* ſpeaketh) *how doth God know, can he judge through the dark Clouds*; *Job* 22: 13. And with theſe *Atheiſts*, in the 94. Pſal. who ſay, *the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard it.* If ſo, hearken to what the *Pſalmiſt* there teacheth, *underſtand ye brutiſh among the People, and ye fools when will ye be wiſe? He that planted the ear, ſhall he not hear? He that formed the eye ſhall he not ſee? He that chaſtiſeth the Heathen ſhall not he correct? He that teacheth men knowledge ſhall not he know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of Man, yea he ſpieth them out a far off*; he is privy to all our wayes, and there is nothing that we do, hid from him

him, how therefore dare any presume to offend and to provoke Him? For God is a terrible GOD, and of great power, *if he but touch the Mountains they smoke, when the voice of his thunder was in the Heaven, the lightnings lightned the World, the Earth trembled and shook. At thy rebuke, O GOD of Jacob,* saith the *Psalmist, both the Chariot and the Horse are cast into a dead sleep, thou therefore even thou art to be feared, and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry? Psal: 76: 6. 7. If God arise his enemies shall be scattered, they also that hate Him shall flee b fore him; as smoke is driven away, so shall he drive them away, as wax melteth before the fire, so shall the wicked perish at the presence of God. Psal: 68: 1. 2.* 'Tis strange to see how warry Men will be of offending those who may ruine their Fortune, or take away their Lives, or make them miserable here, and yet at the same time, to find them not in the least afraid of exasperating God, who besides the punishments he can inflict in this World, is able to render one *eternally miserable*? and what a folly is it then to fear any more then him, and to be more careful to shun a small evil, then that which is unspeakeably great? *I* shal conclude with these words of our *Saviour, I say unto you my Friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after*

that have no more that they can doe: but I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear, fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell, yea I ſay unto you, fear him. Luke 12. 4.

SECTION VI.

Of Walking with GOD.

'Tis the Errour of ſome, that they think the *whole of Religion* conſiſts in ſome few *Externall Acts and Performances*, which having done, they think they have acquitted themſelves ſufficientlie of *the Worſhip of GOD:* Thus for Example, they make *Religion* to be, to *Faſt*, and *Pray*, and *keep the Church*, and *Obſerve the Sabbath*, &c. and by doing theſe, they imagine they have done enough, to ſet themſelves up for the *true Worſhippers of* GOD. But though theſe Actions be neceſſarie parts of *Religion*, yet they prove but dull inſipide things, if the *Intervals* betwixt them be not likeways fill'd up with proper and agreeable Exerciſes, which tend to the *Honour* and *Glory of GOD.* To Worſhip GOD is not to perform a *Particular ſett of Actions*, but to order the whole Life and Converſation aright before him. Wherefore in *Scripture* it is generallie ſet forth, by *the* Phraſe of *Walking with GOD*

GOD, thus ſaith the *Prophet Micah he hath ſhewed thee O Man, what is Good, and what doth the Lord thy GOD require of thee, but to do Juſtlie, and to love Mercy, and to walk humblie with thy GOD*; Micah 6. 8 It is recorded alſo of *Enoch and Noah* to their commendation, *that they walked with GOD*; Gen: 5. 24. 6. 9. And it is a *certain rule*, that when GOD commends *any thing* in any of *his Servants*, it lays an *Obligation* on all the Reſt, to imitat that thing, that thereby they alſo might pleaſe him.

That there is Frequent mention of *walking with GOD* in the *Scripture*, is known to all: and we deſign at preſent to unfold the *Importance of the Phraſe*, and to ſhew the things comprehended therein, are neceſſarie acts of GODS worſhip, and that who ſo would own and acknowledge him, ought to do it by *theſe Inſtances.*

The *Septuagint*, and *Saint Paul* following them, render the Phraſe by *Pleaſing GOD*: But in doing ſo, they rather have had an eye to the *End* of this *Duty*; then to explain the *Particulars thereof.* The ſcope and deſign of *Walking with GOD* is *to pleaſe him*, but by *what Means* we ſhall beſt do that; we will learn by conſidering the *Reaſon of the Phraſe* and what is implyed therein.

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It is a Metaphoricall speech taken from the custome of *Mens conversing together*, especialy of *Inferiours* keeping company with their *Superiours*: And it importeth these *several Particulars*, *first*, a dutifull regard of GOD'S Presence. *Secondly* a carefull observance of what he doth. *Thirdly*, the consulting him about what concerns us, especially the great and Momentous Acts of our Life: *Fourthly*, and and lastly, a stedfast and Faithful following, or keeping close those Directions and Advices which he gives. We shall take a view of each of these; and *First*,

Of Regarding GOD'S Presence.

First, *walking with GOD*, implyes *a dutifull regard to his Presence*, that is out of respect to GOD, we ought to take care to carry our selves decently and sutably before him; for the *Presence* of *great* and *Worthy persons* doth alwayes oblidge to a discreet and civill Behaviour. There be some indeed who are never over-awed by any, but speak, and do what ever comes in their head, and what ever their Humors prompts them to, what ever place or Company they be in; which bewrayes a great want of Discretion, and shews them to be insensible of what

what reſpect is due to thoſe before whom they take this liberty. Certainly is is very great inſolency, to act fooliſhly, or ſpeak impertinently, before ſuch whoſe either place, or wiſdom, or vertue, doth command reſpect and reverence from us. When *Servants* are before their *Maſters*, or *Children* before their *Parents*, or *Subjects* before their *Prince*, they ought to forebear not only what they know will certainly diſpleaſe; but alſo all things light and undecent, *as Fooliſh jeſting*, and *Filthy communication*, and *the like:* But how much more ought the *Preſence of Almighty GOD* oblidge us to compoſe our ſelves to a humble, Holy, and Vertuous behavour? GOD gave it in Precept to *Abraham*, *walk before Me, and be thou perfect*; Gen. 17. 1. That is, *conſider thy ſelf alwayes as in my ſight, and walk agreeably to the belief thereof, by behaving thy ſelf Perfectly and Uprightly*". *All the wayes of a Man are before the Lord, and he ſeeth all his goings*, as it is Job 34: 21. *None can hide themſelves from him in ſecret places that he cannot ſee them, for every Creature is naked and open before Him:* And therefore, what *Solomon* adviſeth, when we come to the *houſe of GOD*, ought to be our care in every place, though never ſo ſecret and remote from the ſight of Men, ſeing God is preſent every where

where as well as in his *Temples*; *keep thy foot, be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God*; *Eccles.* 5. 1.

By this we do not mean, that Persons should every where and at every time, be taken up with *Prayer* and *Meditation*, and such other *Religious Exercises*, as are proper for *the House of God*, for God hath enjoyned *other imployments* besides these, and our *present State* and *condition* makes it necessary, often to mind other things. But what we would here inculcat, is that the sense of the *Divine Presence*, should make us take up *Davids resolution*, *I will take heed to my wayes, that I sin not with my tongue*; *Psal:* 39. 1. We ought to cut off from our Conversation whatsoever is evil and offensive to God, and to study as much as possible to demean our selves alwayes sutably, that is, as becomes our Station, the Time, Place, and other Circumstances requisite to be observ'd. *Be*cause Gods Eye is alwayes upon us, it should be our endeavour to do those things which he approves of, which doth not tye us to do always what is best in it self simply, or when compared to other things, but only that we never be busied in other then Lawfull and innocent things, and that we be ever carefull to do what is best relatively, and agreeable

able to the Occaſion, Time, Place and Witneſs of our Actions.

When we thus ſtudy to order our *converſation aright*, and to remove from it, what is evil, fooliſh, and undecent, in regard of God's preſence which attends us, we do *highly honour* God, and it is as *acceptable Worſhip* as we can pay to Him: And without this, he will little regard our *ſett* and *ſolemn ſervices*. And indeed how can it be ſaid, that they own or honour God, who are no wayes carefull how they behave themſelves before him? But they may be truly ſaid to acknowledge him, who out of a *due deference to his preſence* which fills both Heaven and Earth, do ſhun warrily what they think unworthy of it. Though there be ſome ſo out of meaſure, inſolent and wicked, as not to care in whoſe preſence they are; yet *generally* the *preſence of men* have ſome influence upon us, and will reſtrain us from many things, which otherwayes we would, and are inclined to do, what groſs *Atheiſm* then is it? And what a high contempt of God doth it ſpeak out! To be over-awed by the eye of Man, and not by the preſence of Almighty GOD! To do and forbear any thing, becauſe Men are witneſſes, and do approve or diſcommend it, and yet not to care to do or neglect the

ſame thing though God ſee us, What a diſhonour is done to God, when we regard Man more then him? And do we not regard man more then *God*, when we are more deſirous of applauſe from Men, then to find *favour in the Eyes of GOD*? And when we withdraw our ſelves from the eyes of Men leſt they ſhould know our evil Actions, but never value God's ſight and knowledge thereof? He who doth thus, hath not taken *the Lord to be his God*, he doth not own and acknowledge him, he bows only to Men, to his own *Credit* or *Homour*, and hath ſet up theſe for his *GOD*. Wherefore who would not be guilty of ſuch *groſs Idolatry*, as to worſhip the *Creature* more then the *Creator*, and and who would teſtifie and make it appear that they indeed adore the *true GOD*, let them not ſlight or deſpiſe the *Divine Preſence*, but let them alwayes eye and conſider it, and be carefull to carry themſelves alwayes, as before ſo Great and Glorious a *Majeſty*. And ſeing that God is every where, and hath his eye alway upon us, let us in private and in publick, at home and abroad, at all times and in all places, walk wiſely and circumſpectly, let us not be guilty of ſuch incivility towards God, as to do any unworthy thing before him: but let us labour ſo to behave

behave our ſelves, that he may think us worthy of that teſtimony, which he gave unto *Job*, whom he ſaid, was a *perfect and upright man, One that feared GOD, and eſchewed evil*; *Job* 1. and 1,

Of Obſerving GOD'S Wayes and Actions.

In the ſecond place, *Walking with GOD*, implies *a carefull obſervance of whatſoever he doth*: For it is uſuall for ſuch as are in company together, to watch and take Notice of one anothers Words and Actions; and if one be more eminent for Wiſdom and Vertue, or any other excellency, then ſuch a are with him are the more oblidg'd to eyes his Motions and and Behaviour. Nothing which *Excellent* and *Worthy Perſons* ſpeake or doe, ſhould fall to the Ground un-obſerv'd; and it doth ſpeake out ſome contempt of *one* to think that what they do or ſay is not worth the noticing: as therefore out of reſpect to *Great* and *Eminent perſonages* we ought ſeriouſly to conſider them, their *S*peeches &Actions, and to count them worthy our remembrance, ſo much more ſhould *our eyes be fixed upon God*, and it is much more our dutie to conſider him, what he hath done and what he dayly doth in the World; that

the conſideration thereof, we may return *Him due praiſe and glory*. For this end GOD endued us with *Rational Spirits*, and with *underſtanding Faculties*, that we might be capable of Contemplating himſelf, and his workes. And therefore, when we turn away our eyes from ſuch Contemplations, or neglect them, we do in ſo farr ſwerve from the *Deſign* of our *Creation*, and do diſappoint GOD of that *Tribute of Praiſe* which is due unto him, yea, in ſteed of honouring him, we do actually diſhonour him, by ſlighting the *Effects* and *Products* of *his infinite Wiſdom*, *Power*, *and Goodneſs*. *All GOD'S Actings* are like himſelf and do ſhew forth his *Admirable Perfections*, there is no part, even of the *Material world*, but is ſtamped with ſome impreſſion of his *Almighty power* and *unſearchable wiſdom*, and *Infinite goodneſs*: And therefore what the *Pſalmiſt* ſayes of the *Heavens*, *Pſal.* 19. 1. May be ſaid of *all GOD'S other works*; *they all declare the glory of GOD*, *i. e.* *As* a *Curious engine* or *Fine Piece of Work*, doth hold out the *Skill* and *Cunning* of him that made it; ſo all the *Works of GOD* have in them, what doth ſet forth and proclaime, how wiſe, how great, and good he is. And as the *External* and *Material World*, doth contain

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Viſible Characters of the *Divine greatneſs and Perfections*, ſo *GOD* hath created *Rational* and *Intellectual Beeings*, viz. *Angels* and *Men*, capable to diſcern and read them; that by ſo doing they may ſound forth his Praiſe.

The *Contemplation* and *Admiration* of *God's works* and *Wayes*, is our proper, and ſhould be our conſtant imployment: And if it had not been for this, there would not have been beſtowed upon us ſuch Powers and Capacities. Wiſe and Underſtanding Perſons, will not Expend more upon any thing, then it is worth; they will not reare up *ſtately fabricks* meerly to lodge *Swine*, nor will they buy *fine Silk* and *Carpet* to *Wipe ſhoos* and *Diſhes:* and neither would *GOD* have endued us with *underſtanding Souls*, *Immortal Spirits*, if we had been only deſtin'd to the Acts of a *Brutiſh* and *Senſuall life*; for then what *Judas* ſaid impertinently, when the *Box* of *Oyntment* was powred upon our *LORD*, might have been here put as a very pertinent queſtion, *What needed all this Coſt.* For ſomething leſs then *Reaſon* and *Spirit*, a meer *Animal Sagacity* might have ſerved, and been ſufficient for finding out and taking care of *Bodily Pleaſures*, and *Accommodations.* GOD and his Works therefore, are the only ſutable

table *object*, for our thoughts to be imployed about: these indeed are answerable to the capacities of our Soul; and as the considerations thereof, tendeth to the Honour of GOD, so it elevats our selves to a proper and becoming Dignity; whereas the most of other things are so far below us, and so much within our reach, that it is a *debasing of our Natures*, too much to mind, or to be taken up with them.

However, it is certain all the *Saints* and *Servants* of *GOD* have ever thought it their Duty, and a proper and necessary Testification of their Respect unto *GOD*, to be taken up with the *Contemplation of his Works*, both of *Creation and* Providence, and to set a part sometime dayly for this purpose. We are told that it was *Isaac's* custome, *to go out to the Field and meditate about even-tide*; *Gen.* 24: 63: and no doubt his Meditations were such as we are speaking of. The Book of *Job* shews how much that *holy Man* and his *Friends* were accustomed to the consideration of GOD'S *Works and Wayes*; for all their Discourse and Reasonings are taken thence. Yea, when GOD himself appeared unto *Job*, he calls him to a *particular consideration of his great and wonderful Works*, and does there-

therefore largely diſplay them before him, in the 38. and following Chapters. Nay, what are all the *Pſalms*, but as ſo many *devout Meditations of GOD'S Works*, or *Pious Hymns* compoſed in memory of them? *The Works of the LORD*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *are great, and they are ſought out of all them, that have pleaſure therein. His Work is honourable and Glorious and he hath ordained his wonderfull Works to be remembred*; *Pſal.* 111. 2. 3. And again he ſaith, *All thy works ſhall praiſe thee, O Lord, and thy Saints ſhall bleſſe thee*? That is, as his works contain the matter of his Praiſe, ſo the *Saints* ſhall publiſh and Declare it, by admiring and magnifying of them, *they ſhall*, as he goeth on, *ſpeake of the Glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power to make known to the Sons of Men his mighty Acts, and the Glorious Majeſty of his Kingdom*, *Pſal.* 145. 10. &c:

Thus it appears, that the obſerving of *GOD'S wayes and works*, makes a great part of his Worſhip; and that hereby we do truely acknowledge him to be what he is, not only of *great Majeſty*, but alſo a GOD of *Infinite Wiſdom* and *Power*: Becauſe by ſo doing, we declare that *He does nothing in Vain*, nothing that is not *infinitly Worthy*, of our moſt *Serious Conſideration*, and that

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our thoughts can never be better imployed, them in the Contemplation of what he hath done and dayly doth in the World. Let us therefore frequently betake our ſelves, to the Contemplation of GOD'S *Works* both of *Nature* and *Providence*; Let us ſit down and ſeriouſly and devoutly conſider them, and Admire, and Adore that Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſſe which appears in them.

It will become us to take notice, *how manifold the works of the LORD are*, and *in what Wiſdom he hath made them all:* How he hath reared up this vaſt fabrick of the World out of nothing, and Wonderfully beautified & adorned it. *How he hath ſtretched out the Heavens like a curtain, and in them hath ſet a Tabernacle for the Sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run a race, whoſe going forth is from the end of the Heaven and his circuit to the ends of it, and there is nothing, hid from the heat thereof.* What a wiſe and admirable contrivance is the *Scituation* and *Motion* of the *Sun*, whereby all the parts of the world are equally enlightned? For what any part wants at one time, it hath at another, thoſe places which are longeſt without the *Sun*, have him alſo longeſt with them, ſo that *his Preſence* alwayes equals his *Abſence*.

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And the diſpenſing *his preſence* thus differently is much more uſefull and convenient, then if it had been otherwiſe; it is viſibly better that the *Sun* moves now betwixt the *two Tropicks* not in a ſtraight or direct Line, then if it had rolled regularly upon the *Equator*: for then thoſe *under the Line* or near it would have had all the Advantage, and his influence upon the reſt of the World would have been very faint, like to that in *March* and *September*, which is not ſufficient to produce and ripen the *various fruits* of the Earth, which are uſefull both for our Support and Pleaſure. But when we have our eyes lifted up to the Heavens, the *Sun* is not all which is worthy to be obſerved there, we ought likewiſe to conſider the *Moon* which *GOD hath appointed for* the *Diſtinguiſhing Seaſons*, and hath placed as a Lamp to give light in the night, that thoſe whoſe neceſſities call to travell then, may be derected and ſee their way. We ought to view the *Stars* alſo, theſe admirable *Embelliſhments* of the *Heavenly Frame*, which we have reaſon to think vaſtly bigg, beyond their appearance, elſe how would they be ſeen at ſuch a diſtance? And ſeeing *Reaſon* teacheth them to be ſo great in quantity, and that our eyes ſhew them to be many in

number, and Art yet farr more, we may well conclude that the work of GODS *Creation* is great & magnificent above the reach of our Apprehenſions: And therefore it may fill us with wonder and aſtoniſhment, that GOD ſhould take ſuch notice of *Man*, who bears ſo ſmall a proportion to the reſt of the *Creation*; *When I conſider the Heavens*, ſaith *David*, *the work of thy Fingers, the Moon, and the Stars, which thou haſt ordained; Lord, what is man, that thou art mindfull of him? Or the Son of Man that thou viſiteſt him? Pſalm* 8. 3. 4.

The Earth is to the reſt of the World as a point to a great glob, or a grain of ſand to a high mountain, and yet it affords many inſtances both of the Wiſdom and Power of GOD. *It hangs upon nothing*, as *Job* ſpeaks; and yet as the *Pſalmiſt* hath obſerved, *he hath ſo laid the Foundations thereof, that it cannot be removed for ever*; the Earth is ordained a *Temporary abode for Man*, and it is made moſt uſefull and convenient; for it affords not only Neceſſaries but Comforts; it yelds not only Food to ſuſtain our Life, but alſo pleaſures to affect our ſenſes; there are proper objects to every appetite, and things ſutable to all the ends and purpoſes of our *Preſent Condition*. Every place gives the neceſſaries of Life,

Life, and what is else desireable is wisely sorted, so that they who live in the severall parts of the world may be engaged to entertain *mutual Commerce* together. Though the State of things be not now as 'twas at the beginning, (because sin hath altered the order and beauty of them, by reason thereof *every creature groaneth and travelleth with pain*) yet we may easily discern that GOD designed us all content and satisfaction even here below: For with what variety of delights hath he repleniſhed this world: What a multitude of living Creatures of diverse kinds, hath he put therein for our use and service? And how wisely are they all disposed? The Cattel go upon the mountains the wild beasts lodge in Forests, Fowls nest in Trees, *the high hills are a refuge for Goats, and the rocks for the Coneys.* And though our sins do provock GOD to turn the earth into a barren Wilderness, yet he *still visits and watereth it, and greatly enricheth it, he Watereth the ridges thereof abundantly, and setteth the furrows thereof, he maketh it soft with showers, & blesseth the springing thereof: He crowns the Year with his Goodness, and his paths drop Fatness; they Drop upon the Pastures of the Wilderness, and the little hills rejoyce on every side, the Pastures are cloathed with flocks, and the valleys also are co-*

vered with Corn. He causeth grasse to grow for the Cattel, and Herb for the service of Man: that he may bring forth food out of the Earth, and and Wine that maketh glad the heart of Man, and Oyl to make his face to shine, and bread which strengthneth Mans heart. The earth is full of the Riches of the LORD; so is the great and wide Sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great Beasts, who herd together in Companies, as well as those upon the Land, at their appointed Moneths and Seasons, they ascend from the bottom of the Deep and walk upon the Surface of the Waters, that they may be catcht by the Children of Men to serve for Food and other necessaries. There goe the Ships: there is that Leviathan, whom GOD hath made to play therein. By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eye lids of the Morning; out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out; out of his nostrils go smoke as out of a seething Pot or Cauldron. He *maketh the deep to boyle like a Pot, and the Sea to be as a Pot of Oyntment, he maketh a path to shine after him, so that one would think the Deep to be hoary. Upon the Earth there is not his like, so that one may be cast down at the very sight of him;* as it is *Job* 41. 9. Where also he is largely described. The frame, the sagacity, the ends and uses of the several sorts of living Creatures

Creatures are wonderfull, and their dependance on GOD no leſſe: for they are all made *to waite upon GOD, that he may give them their meat in due ſeaſon, what he giveth they gather, he openeth his hand and they are filled with good. He hides his face and they are troubled; he takes away their breath, and then they die and return to their duſt.* Again, *he ſendeth forth his Spirit, and they are Created*; thus he ſtill *renewеth the face of the Earth.*

Theſe Various and Wonderfull *Works* of *Nature*, which we have daylyand every where before our Eyes, we ought not to ſlight; but ſhould duely and ſeriouſly conſider them, that we may have more abundant matter for *praiſing him*, whoſe greatneſſe they ſhew forth. We miſtake it very much, if we think the Conſideration of theſe things, ſhould be reſerved and put over to *Natural Philoſophers*; nay, they are proper for the meditation of every *Chriſtian.* Neither is it neceſſary to be train'd up at *Schooles*, to become qualified for ſuch *contemplations:* for the moſt Ignorant Perſon, and he or ſhe that is leaſt Book-learn'd, if they but ſeriouſly ſet themſelves to it, may be able well enough to diſcover and find out the greatneſs and Wiſdom and Uſefulneſſe *of God's Works* and if they doe this, it is all which is requiſite:

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The wiſeſt *Philoſophers* can aim no farthers and when they do not aime at this, their Speculations turn vain, empty and inſipid things.

But of all *Gods Works*, none ought more to be conſidered, then thoſe of *His Providence*, *His Actings*, and *Dealings* with the Children of Men: *How the LORD looketh from Heaven and beholdeth all the Sons of Men; from the place of his Habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the Earth, he faſhioneth their Hearts alike, and conſidereth all their Works. And though there be many devices in Mens Hearts, yet he ſuffereth his own Counſell only to ſtand; for he bringeth the Counſell of the wicked to nought, and maketh the devices of the People of none effect.* 'Tis well worth the while to take notice, how miraculouſly he ſometimes preſerves Kings and Kingdoms from Deſtruction, when it is much threatned them by Enemies; and how again at other times he cauſeth them to be miniſhed and brought low, maugre all the *humane endeavours* to the contrary. How *he powreth contempt upon Princes, and cauſeth them to wander in the wilderneſs, where there is no way, that* they may know themſelves to be but Men; and *that the moſt High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whom he will.* And how on the other hand to let the People ſee that

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there is no power but of GOD, he curbs their Rage, ſtills their Tumults, defeats their Conſpiracies and Rebellious Deſigns, and and forceth them to ſtand in aw of the Authority eſtabliſhed over them, which otherwiſe is too weake to reſtrain their fury. *The Lord maketh Poor, and maketh Rich, he bringeth low and lifted up, he raiſeth up the Poor out of the duſt, and lifteth up the Beggar from the Dunghill, to ſet them among Princes, and to make them inherit the Throne of Glory.* It's fit to obſerve, how variouſly and wonderfully, God puniſheth Sin, and rewardeth Vertue and Righteouſneſs; for his Hand findeth out ſinfull Men, and maketh them to ſmart for all their evil Deeds, and repayeth them as they have dealt with others, that with *Adonibezek*, they may ſay, *as I have done, ſo GOD requited me.* But he bleſſeth the Righteous and giveth them Peace; he ſendeth them *many Afflictions* to teach them Wiſdom, and to perfect them in Virtue, but alſo *he delivereth them out of them all*, that Men may learn to truſt the LORD, and to ſeek his Favour above all Things. Thus we ought to conſider the various inſtances of Gods Providence towards the Children of Men, what Straits, Difficulties, and Dangers they fall into, and how ſtrangely they eſcape them

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and how wonderfully their Peace and Comfort, their Honour and Happineſs are brought about by wayes unſeen, and by methods unthought of either by themſelves or others. *Whoſo is wiſe*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *and will obſerve th ſe things*, *even they ſhall underſtand the loving Kindneſs of the Lord*; *Pſal* 107. 43. And certainly ſuch as are truly wiſe either to GOD, or for themſelves will not fail to obſerve *GODS* working in the World, eſpecially his *manifold Providences*, and *Wonderfull works towards the Children of Men*, whereby they ſhall both encreaſe in *Wiſdom*, even the chiefeſt *Wiſdom*, and ſhall alſo underſtand, and be made ſenſible of GODS *gracious Love and Favour*: *Which* ſhall yet farther appear to their Comfort, if they take exact notice of the *Divine Providence* towards themſelves, *how wonderfuly they were made!* How carefully preſerved! how much they are followed with his goodneſs! And what wiſe contrivances are made for their good, which they little know of, or think upon! Every one of us may diſcover *theſe things*, in the *courſe of our Life*: And as this diſcovery will manifeſt the Divine favour, ſo t'will raviſh our Souls with delight, there being nothing more delightfull and pleaſant, then to

to find out that we are *Beloved of GOD.* Wherefore as it is a piece of ſlight put upon GOD, not to obſerve theſe his *Admirable workings*, and *Manifeſtations of his Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs*; So it is a prejudice unto our ſelves; in that hereby we are deprived of unſpeakable Pleaſures and Delight, which otherwiſe would accrue unto us. And is it not ſtrange that this ſo pleaſant Duty, ſhould be ſo much neglected and laid aſide; the meaner Sort drudge always at their Work, and take no leaſure to meditate; and thoſe who can, and do allow themſelves ſome ſpare hours, do for the moſt part imploy them in hearing and telling News, in Curious enquiries about the Motions & Tranſactions, of ſome remote Prince, which little concerns them, and which amounts to little when known, they becoming thereby neither wiſer nor more Happy. Nay 'its to be feared, that even thoſe we call Studious Perſons, make theſe *Divine Contemplations* the leaſt part of their Study: but beſtow more pains to know the Journeys of a *Cæſar*, or *Alexander*, the opinions of *Ancient & Modern Authours*, and the like. *I* do not ſay, we ſhould be altogether taken up with the conſideration of Gods *Wayes and Works*; but certainly nothing concerns us more, nor

is there any thing more worthy of us, this is moſt worthy of Angels. What a fooliſh thing then is it to mind Trivial and Inconſiderable things, and to ſlight what is of greateſt moment? To be much buſied about what we have nothing to do with, and in the Mean time to neglect and be careleſs of what is both our *Intereſt and Duty?* what reſpect to the *Divine Majeſty* oblidgeth us to, and by doing of which we may procure to our ſelves much Joy and Satisfaction.

Now as it is our Duty thus to obſerve the *Works and wayes of GOD*; ſo that we may be enabled to make a wiſer Obſervation of them, 'twill be neceſſary to follow the Light and Direction of the *holy Scripture:* By which means we ſhall both ſee the more clearly, and ſhall alſo underſtand the ends and uſes of *GODS works* more fully. Many things which lye hid from the *light of nature*, may be diſcerned by the *Word of GOD*, this gives us a better view of many of Gods Actings, then what is poſſible to have otherwiſe. And hereby only we are inſtructed in *one Work* of GOD, which of all others is the greateſt and moſt wonderfull, I mean, the *Work of Mans Redemption*; This is a *deep Myſtery*, and of the greateſt importance; both

both for it ſelf, & becauſe it helps to unriddle all the other *Myſteries of Divine Providence.* Such as are ignorant may with the *Greeks* count it *Fooliſhneſs*, but who ſeriouſly examine it, ſhall find it *the Power of GOD, and Wiſdom of GOD*; Therefore it is ſaid, the *Angels deſire to look into it*; 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. And ſeing it concerneth us more then them, certainly we can never ſufficiently either Conſider it or Admire it. If it be our Duty to obſerve the *Divine Tranſactions*, as we have made it appear, ſure we ought to Contemplate this which is the chief Contrivance of his Wiſdom, and the very end of all the other purpoſes of his *Eternal Counſel.* In the *Myſtery* of the *Goſpel*, *are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*, as *St. Paul* ſpeaks, *Col* 2. 3. Here we ſee the moſt amazing things, *viz.* An *union betwixt two Natures*, *infinitly diſtant*, a *Reconciliation* betwixt *infinite Juſtice*; and *infinit Mercy*, the greateſt ſeverity towards Sin, and the greateſt kindneſs towards Sinners, expreſſed by one and the ſame Act. All *Gods works declare his Glory*, but never any more or ſo much as this, his Power, Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Holineſs, Juſtice, Mercy, and other Perfections were never ſo *Illuſtriouſly Diſplay*ed as here. On this therefore we muſt in a

more ſpeciall manner fix our Thoughts and that not meerly to ſatisfy our Curioſity, or to ſtuffe our Heads with Notions: but to fill us with a greater Knowledge of GOD, to raiſe our Admiration of him, to excite our Love to him, and to ſtirre up our Souls and all their Powers and Faculties, *to Bleſſe and Praiſe Him for his Goodneſs and Wonderfull Works to the Children of Men.* And as this ſhould be our End, in Obſerving and Contemplating the *Wayes and Works of God*; ſo upon this very account we are obliedged thereto, becauſe that this is the proper and neceſſary mean to carry on this End, we cannot Love, nor Admire, nor Adore no Truſt, &c: What we do not know, and we cannot know GOD otherwaves then by his Works, and thoſe Manifeſtations which he hath given of himſelf, for there can be no *Immeditat intuition* of his *eſſence*, and the *Idea* which we have of him by nature will ſoon be defaced, if it be not cheriſhed by ſuch *Meditations.* That therefore we may know GOD, and knowing him be engaged to thoſe Acts of Love, Praiſe, Truſt, Dependance, &c. Which is due to him, we ought to obſerve thoſe Works and Actions of GOD which he hath laid before us, in Nature; and in his Word, and which daylie

daylie appear by the *Adminiſtration of his Providence* towards our ſelves and others.

Wherefore alſo we muſt not do this only now and then, or in a ſlight overly manner: Bnt we ought to be taken up frequently with ſuch *Contemplations*, and when we ſet about them it ſhould be with all Serioufneſs and Attention, that we may underſtand what we Conſider, and that it may have a due *Impreſſion* on us; ſhort and *Superficiall* glances do little good. *Indeed* what occrrues to us, as we Converſe with others, or go up and down about our Affairs, we need not ſtay long there on, but may obſerve paſſingly: But 'twill be neceſſary beſides, to ſet a part ſome particular time for this purpoſe, that our *Meditations* may be more Deliberate, and free of *Diſtractions*. How much time ſhould be allotted, and what hours are beſt muſt be left to each ones Prudence and Diſcretion; for there can be no general ules, preſcribed to all: ſome have their time at their own Diſpoſal, and can uſe it as they pleaſe, others are not ſo. The *Firſt ſort* may keep hours, and are oblidged to ſpend more time in this Exerciſe; but for the Laſt, they muſt take the Evening, or the Morning, or Midday, as is moſt convenient for them, and muſt continue

tinue long or ſhort as agrees beſt with their Station and Imployment. Every one hath the *Lords day* almoſt free, and therefore it is every ones Duty to imploy this Day thus, which is indeed the *Main end of the Day*; and they who cannot command much time all the Week, are above all others oblidged to uſe this Day well to the preſent purpoſe. As to the Order and *Method* of *Meditating*, it is not very *Material*, neither need any be nicely Curious, in what Order, or after what Way and Manner they proceed in *conſidering theſe Works of God*, Providing they ſeek them out ſeriouſly, labour to underſtand them truely, and make proper and uſefull Reflections on them. At every Retirement, we cannot make ſerious and deep Obſervations of all *Gods Works*, therefore to conſider them well, 'twill be requiſite to conſider them ſeverally. Sometimes our *inward Diſpoſition*, *Externall ſtate*, *the preſent occaſion*, *and other Circumſtances* make ſome of Gods Works more proper and ſutable then others, when it is ſo, we ſhould determine our *Meditations* to theſe eſpecially: But ordinarly when there is no ſuch particular Reaſon to determine us, 'twill be beſt & moſt profitable to follow the courſe & order of the *Scripture*, for we may call the

Scripture

Scripture, *Divine Memoires*, which hold forth to us the great and admirable Actions of the *Universall Monarch* of the *World*. And thus much of the *Second instance of Walking with God.*

Of Consulting GOD.

The *third particular* meant by *walking with GOD*, is the consulting Him about what concerns us. For as is usuall for such as are in Company together, to Advise with one another; so by walking with God we are to understand, the asking his Counsel and Direction, and the Guidance of his unerring wisdom. The more eminent any one is, the more others are oblidg'd to advise with him, especially if with all he hath a Jurisdiction & Authority over them, and that there be Obligations on them to study the pleasing him. Thus *S*ervants and Children ought to consult their Parents and Masters, not only because they should think them more wise then themselves: but also because it is their *D*uty to Humour and Please them, and so it being our *D*uty to *walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing*; as it is *Col.* 1. 10. Therefore we should do nothing without his Warrant and Advice. *The way of Man is not*

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in himself, as the *Prophet* hath it, *it is not in him that walketh to direct his Steps*, *Jer.* 10. 23. We are for the most part Fooliſh and Ignorant, and do not know what is the beſt and and ſafeſt Courſe to ſteer, and which is worſe we are oftimes carried away by diverſe Luſts; and theſe *Luſts* do blind our Judgements, and hinder us from diſcerning the Truth, and therefore it is great preſumption in us to follow the *devices and ſuggeſtions of our own hearts*, unleſſe we find them *allowed and approved of by God*: Unleſs he Guid and inſtruct us, we may, nay ſhall certainly erre, and our Deſigns ſhall miſcarry. Our Peace and Comfort here, and *Happineſſe hereafter*, are not the effects of Chance; but the Fruits of God's *Favour and Love*, which is not procured by walking at random, or doing any thing inconſideratly, never taking heed whether it be fit or not: We only then pleaſe God, and gain His *Favour*, when we wiſely conſider our doings, and do ſeriouſly deliberat about all we have to do eſpecially what is of greater moment and concernment, that all may be agreeable to the Minde and Will of GOD. As *Solomon* therefore adviſeth, *Truſt in the Lord with all thine heart and leannot to thine own underſtanding; In all thy wayes acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths*; Prov. 3. 5, 6. There

There *being* now no *Prophet* to enquire at, nor any Empowred (as the *High Prieſt* of old) to deliver *Oracles* and give *Reſponſes*; it will be asked what we mean by conſulting GOD? wherefore to clear this Matter and to prevent all Miſtakes thereanent, and to guard againſt all Abuſes to which ſome may be ready to wreſt it, I ſhall ſhew two things. *1ſt.* Whereabout we ſhould conſult God. *2ly.* What way and manner it is to be done.

As to the firſt, by *conſulting GOD*, is not meand the betaking our ſelves to him, to know the Event of any Buſineſs we are engag'd in, or whither if we do this or the other thing 'twill ſucceed and proſper; we may indeed, nay ought to recommend all our Lawfull and Virtuous Undertakings to God, that he may bleſſe them with ſucceſſe and we may lawfully wiſh Succeſſe thereto, but ever with a Humble Submiſſion to the *will of God*, according as our *Saviour* hath taught us to ſay, *not my will, but thine be done:* but to be deſirous to know before-hand, what God purpoſeth to do, is not allowed us. *It is not for you, ſaith Chriſt, to know the times and Seaſons, which the Father hath put in his own power*; *Acts* 1. 7. and as not the *times* and *Seaſons*, ſo neither the *things themſelves* which he hath determined to bring to paſs.

These *Secrets* of the *Divine Counsel*, God hath reserv'd to himself, and 'twould but offend him to be over curious to know them. It is not the will of God that we seek for this, for he hath given us no Means to come to the knowledge thereof; for to have recourse to *Astrologers*, *Wizards*, such as have *Familiar Spirits*, *&c.* Are means as Unlawfull as they are Uncertain and Deceitful. Nor is it profitable for us to know what shall befall us, God keeps this Secret, because it is better to be Ignorant of it, then if it were revealed; 'tis better that we *live by Faith then such a sight*, because hereby these necessary vertues of Patience, trust in God, Watchfulness, and Diligence, are exercised & confined. It is true the *Jews* of old had Liberty granted them to enquire about future Events and their Desires were satisfied as appears by many Instances in *Scripture:* but now the Reason of such Extraordinary *Temporal priviledges* is ceased, and the *Gospel* requires us to be *entirely resign'd to GOD*, and to be dispos'd either to Prosperity or Adversity, to Disappointments and Successe, with a kind of indifferency; because the *Glory of GOD and our true Felicity*, depend neither upon the one nor the other, but may be Advanced by either of them.

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To *consult* GOD then, is not to enquire into *secret purposes of his Counsel how he intends to dispose of us*: but it is that we may be *informed of our Duty*, that we may understand what becomes us to do in the *several Periods of our life*, and in all those Stations and relations we stand in: what course of Life we should intend; How we ought to carry our selves having chosen one? How we should best spend our Time and Order our Affairs, that as much as possible, we may be without *all offence either to GOD or Man*.

From hence it follows that we ought never to deliberate about things certainly unlawful, nor yet ask of GOD whither at any time we may venture upon them, for this in plain terms is, to ask whither we should thwart his Will, transgresse his Laws, grieve his Spirit, dishonour his Name, and rebell against his Authority. They therefore tempt God, and Act most impudently who ask Counsel in such a Case; and what prompts Men to things sinfull is not the *Spirit of GOD*: the Counsel is not from GOD which Allows and Approves of any *unlawfull deed*. GOD is not the Author of Sin, *He cannot be tempted with evill, neither tempteth he any man*; *Jam* 1. 13. It is a delusion of Satan which draws Persons to wickedness, or

which make them continue the practice of any wicked Action whatever such pretend, and whatever high conceit they may entertain of themselves, yet the *Scripture* tells us, *that it is a heavy Judgement and a sign of a reprobate mind to be given up to do things unlawfull, and which are not convenient*; *Rom:* 1. 28.

When therefore we come to *Consult GOD*, as we ought alwayes in all doubtful Cases, it should be to know what is lawful, and not only what is simply lawful, but also what is expedient, what is sutable for us as we are so Stated & Circumstantiated, and by what wayes and Means we should prosecute those Ends we ought to have before us, *viz.* GOD'S Glory, our Neighbours good, and our own present Comfort, and *after happinesse.*

Now having seen whereabouts we ought to *consult GOD*, we come in the next place to shew *how we are to doe it.* And *First*, we must lay aside all *prejudice and byassed affections* aud put on the *Indefferency of a Traveller*, who hath no Inclination to turn either to the Right or the Left hand, but to be directed in the *Right way.* If we do not this, we are not *Sincere* when we seek *Counsel of God*, not capable to receive it though it be given; this was the fault of the *Young Man* that came to

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our *Saviour*, to ask, *what he ſhould do to inherite eternal Life*? For becauſe the Anſwer would have parted him and his Poſſeſſions, he would not liſten to it. If Men be blinded with Prejudice, they will not ſee the Light though it be clear; nor will they be perſwaded though they have *Sufficient convictions laid before them*, if their Inclinations be ſtrong another way, we muſt therefore free our ſelves of all Paſſion and Prejudice; and be Sincerely Deſirous of *right Information*. In the next place, we muſt *Addreſſe our ſelves to GOD* by *Humble and Hearty Prayer*, that it may pleaſe him to Enlighten the eyes of our Minds, to the diſcerning His Will, and the way wherein we ſhould walk: For if we do not Pray, we are not deſirous hereof, neither duely Value it, and ſo GOD will not think us worthy of it; who Deſpiſe or Lightly eſteem the *Counſel and Direction of the LORD*, ſhall be left to wander in the Ignorance and Darkneſſe of their own Minds: But he will lead and guide them in the Paths of Righteouſneſſe, who humbly ſeek Him. But though Prayer be good, yet it is not the only Means, it muſt not be neglected, but it muſt not be reſted in. We muſt not ask direction, as *Pilate*, *what was Truth* at *Chriſt*, who when he put the queſtion

on, presently went out and stayed not for an Answer. After we have Prayed, we should listen attentively to what GOD sayeth; we ought to hearken carefully to the *voice of GOD.* And therefore, *Thirdly*, we must *search Diligently the Scriptures, for they are the Word of God*, and in and by them he speaketh to us his Will and Pleasure. God hath given the *Scripture*, to be *a Lamp unto our feet and a Light unto our Path*; And so who would walk uprightly so as to Please God, must follow the Guidance thereof. 'Ts true God speaketh also *Inwardly* by his *Spirit* to the Hearts and Minds of Men, but Ordinarly it is by the *outward Means of the Word.* 'Tts seldom and in some singular Cases only, that he speaks to men without the *Mediation of the Scriptures*: However he never speaketh but agreeably to the *Scriptures*, whatever he sayeth any manner of way must be consistent with the *Doctrine and Precepts of the Scriptures*, for GOD neither can nor will contradict Himself. Wherefore all *inward Suggestions* and *Inspirations* must be examined by the *Written word of GOD*, which as *St. Peter* speaks in a like case, is *the surer Word*, 2 Pet 1. 19. We have Reason to put greater Confidence in the *outward Light of the Scriptures*, then what is *inwardly suggest-*

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ed; for we may readily deceive our ſelves here, and take the *deluſions of Satan*, or our own ſtrong Imaginations for the *Inſpirations of GOD'S Spirit*, every one cannot diſtinguiſh betwixt them, and indeed it is often hard for any to do it, but by comparing them to what is delivered in the *Scripture*, which we are ſure is from GOD. We muſt not then be too haſty in concluding our inclination to a thing, or averſion from it, (after that we have prayed fervently) to be from GOD unleſſe it be warranted by the *Word of GOD* revealed in the *Scripture*, or at leſt no wiſe oppoſite to what is there enjoyn'd us.

The *Scriptures* are the *holy Oracles* which deliver the *mind of GOD*, to them therefore we muſt reſort at all times, and on all Occaſions to know what we ſhould do; and by them all Perſons of each Sexe, Age, Condition, Imployment may be inſtructed how to order their *converſation aright before GOD*. For they are ſo compoſed, *that the Man of GOD*, by them *may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works*; 2 *Tim.* 3. 17. 'Tis true every one will not find their particular Caſe Stated and Reſolved, but either Directly or Indirectly, either by expreſſe Precepts or Paralel, and not much different Examples

amples, they ſhall ſee what may ſufficiently inform and reſolve them: And whoſo will give themſelves entirely up to the *conduct of GOD in his word* ſhall without doubt (as we ſhewed before) either by *ſecret Suggeſtions of the Spirit*, or by ſome *ſpeciall occurrences of his providence* be *Particularly directed in the diſpoſall of themſelves and their affairs* which are of greateſt concernment and to which it cannot be expected that the *Scripture* ſhould ſpeak particularly. *The meek will he guide in judgement, and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the LORD are Mercy and Truth, unto ſuch as keep his Covenant and Teſtimonies; Pſal.* 25. 9. 10.

See part first chap. 2.

Thus we have ſhewed how we ſhould *conſult GOD*, and by what means wee may come to be *directed by him*. Now certainly it concerns us very much thus to conſult Him, and to follow theſe Means for acquainting our ſelves with what is proper for us to do. The *Heathens* of old gloried much in their *Oracles*, and uſed to Conſult them in all their affairs, though they were ſo uncertain and Ambiguous, that they proved more often Snares to entrap them, then Lights to guide them. But ſure wee have much more Reaſon to Glory and Rejoyce

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in this *Special Priviledge* we have of *Conſulting the true GOD*, who neither will deceive others, nor can be deceived himſelf; and who hath been Graciouſly pleaſed to ſpeak to us ſo plainly and clearly by *his Word*, and who Promiſes farther Direction as we ſtand in need. Hereby we are enabled to walk wiſely, and are ſhewed the *True way* of carrying on our *Happineſs, and* Peace, *the Teſtimony of the Lord*, ſaith *David, is ſure*, *making wiſe the ſimple; the commandement of the Lord is pure*, *enlightning the eyes.* Pſal. 19. 7, 8. It was a laudable cuſtome amongſt the *Jews*, to *ask Counſel of GOD* before they began any Enterpriſe; and ſo it becomes us to reſort unto the *Scriptures for Counſel and Direction*, where we ſhall receive it fully and clearly if we be deſirous thereof, and follow the Direction preſcribed above. *David* no doubt had many Counſellours, and yet he preferred the *Word and Law* of GOD before them all: *thy teſtimonies*, ſaith he, *are my delight and Counſellours.* And again, he tells, us that *he had more underſtanding then all his Teachers*, *for GODS Teſtimonies were his Meditation*; *Pſ.* 119. 24. 99. It is reported of the *Heathen Socrates* that he pretended to have a certain *Spirit* or *genius*, which he uſed as his Counſellour; and therefore when ever he was required to

ſpeak or to do any thing, his uſuall anſwer was, *ſi Dæmon permiſerit*, *if my ſpirit or genius will ſuffer.* Now it is our Happineſs that we have a better Counſellour to adviſe with, and therefore alſo whenſo e're any thing is propounded unto us, either to our underſtandings or Wills, to be believed or practiſed, let our Anſwer be with the *Pſalmiſt*, *I will hear what GOD the LORD will ſpeak* Pſ. 85. 8. I will firſt conſult GOD, by the *Holy Oracles* of the *Scriptures.* And if we never conclude or reſolve any thing without *adviſing thus with GOD*, we ſhall highly honour him and ſhew an entire regard unto him, and alſo take a Wiſe and moſt Profitable Courſe for our ſelves. But alas! As *Solomon* complains, *wherefore is there a price in the hand of a Fool to get Wiſdom, ſeeing he hath no heart unto it?* So it may be ſaid, *to what purpoſe is it?* And how little doth it avail us, to have the *Scriptures*, ſeing we make ſo little uſe of them, and take ſo little notice of what GOD ſays to us in and by them? How ſad is it, and what matter of regrate to ſee how many miſcarry in this Point? There be many who will readily conſult Fleſh and Blood, they will liſten to the *corrupt maximes* of the World, they will hearken to what the Devil himſelf doth ſay, and ſuggeſt unto them; bnt only what

what GOD the LORD ſpeaketh, they care not to hear: nay with the *deaf Adder*, *they ſtop their ears and will not hearken to the voice of the Charmer, though he Charm never ſo wiſely.* And as Men hereby ſlight and diſhonour GOD, in that they undervalue his *Counſel*, ſo they intangle themſelves in a World of Trouble and Difficultys: for many, nay moſt of our Croſſes and Sorrows, are but the effects of this folly. For when we do not *ask Counſel of the LORD*, but will needs take our own courſes, then he *blaſts our deſigns*, by leaving us to our ſelves, to ſtand by our own ſtrength; and ſo it comes to paſſe, that we have no ability to conquere the difficultys we are engadg'd in, but muſt neceſſarly ſink under them, whereas if we conſulted GOD, he would not fail to concur with *his Power and Providence* to effectuat that which he himſelf had adviſed or approved of. That therefore we may be Wiſe in all our Undertakings, and have Comfort in them, let us undertake nothing without GOD, let us be carefull alwayes to ask Direction of him, praying with *David*, *ſhew me thy wayes O LORD, teach me thy paths, lead me in thy truth and teach me: for thou art the GOD of my Salvation, on thee do I wait all the day.* *Pſ.* 25. 4. And then no doubt GOD

would guide us with his Counsel here, and receive us into Glory hereafter: If withall in the last place, we Stedfastly and Faithfully observe the wayes he layeth before us, and keep close to the Direction he gives, which we told was the last Particular included in *Walking with GOD*, and which comes next to be spoken to,

Of Following GOD.

We must not *Consult* GOD out of *curiosity* to know his Mind and Judgement, but out of a *Sincere desire* and *Purpose* to do his Will and Pleasure. As we must first Advise with him what should be done, so having understood his Mind, we should next with Care and Diligence set about the doing of it. We have Reason sometimes to dispute the Reasonableness and Equity of Mens Counsels and Advices, but we must never call in Question the Justice or Fitness of what GOD *proposeth unto us*, but ought cordially and freely to close with it. Obedience must be *the fruit of our hearing*, or else we Hear to no purpose; and therefore *Hearing and Obeying* in the *Scriptures*, are often taken for one and the same thing: to *hear GOD* is to obey *him*, and to *consult with him*, is to *do his will.*

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True hearing, is *opus animi, non auris*, it is a work of the *Mind* rather then the Eare: But though it reſide in the Mind, yet it muſt ſpread through our Affections and Actions, otherwiſe it is vain and unacceptable.

As he is ſaid to walk with one, who followeth him and taketh the ſame way he goeth, ſo to walk with GOD, is to follow the wayes of GOD, and to tread *the whole paths of his commandments*: For the end of our walking with him muſt be to pleaſe him, as the *Septuagint* ſtill rendreth the Phraſe; now we cannot pleaſe him, if we frequently turn aſide, and go out of the way which he commands us. As a true *Friend* we muſt never leave him or part with him, but muſt follow chearfully whither ſo ever he leads us, be the way fair or foul, pleaſant or unpleaſant. They cannot be ſaid to walk together who only have ſome accidental Rencounters: nor can he be ſaid to *Walk with GOD*, who only complies with him now and then, or in ſome particulars which ſutes with his Humour or proves for his *Intereſt*. They only are ſaid to walk truely together, who hold on the ſame Way, keep ſtill the ſame Pace, carry on the ſame Deſign, run the ſame dangers, and who ſhare together in every thing: even ſo he only *Walks with GOD*, who

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Devots himself entirely to God, whose thoughts and Purposes, Motions, and Actings are all GOD'S, that is, such as he requires and which tend to his Glory; Who doth not sometimes step aside to seek his own Ease, Pleasure or Profite, nor yet taketh wayes which GOD doth not allow of, but he minds wholly the things of *God*, and follows altogether the courses he approves of, even though thereby he expose himself to Danger and Trouble. In *Walking with GOD*, there must be such an Union as is betwixt a Wife and her Husband, whereby his Interest becomes hers, which makes it her Delight and Care to Please him, and which engageth her to abide with him, what ever be his Lot and Condition. It was a noble and generous Friendship, which *Ittai* shewed to *David*, when he fled from *Absolom*, *As the Lord liveth*, said he, *and as my LORD the King liveth, surely in what place my Lord the King shall be whither in death or Life, even there also will thy servant be.* 2 Sam. 15. 21. *Ruth* expressed the like towards her Mother in Law, when she said, *Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge, and the Lord do so to me and more also, if ought but death part thee and me*; now if we would *walk uprightly*

uprightly with GOD, we muſt walk after the ſame manner: for as none but Freinds uſe to walk together, ſo by *Walking with GOD*, is meant ſuch a High and Intimate and Conſtant Friendſhip, which ſticks not at Difficulties, nor ſtartles at Dangers, but which makes a Man chearfully ſet about whatever the Intereſt or Pleaſure of his Friend calls for: An Eminent Inſtance hereof, we have in *Abraham*, who therefore is called *the friend of GOD*; where ever GOD called him, he Chearfully followed; whatever he Enjoyned, he readily Obeyed; he ſtumbled not at Difficulties or Dangers, or any Inconveniences, but yielded an entire obedience to the Will of GOD when ever it was intimate to him.

And as this is to *walk with GOD*, ſo by walking thus with Him we make the moſt proper acknowledgement of him and pay the moſt acceptable Worſhip to him: for hereby we declare a true ſenſe of his Wiſdom, Goodneſſe, Greatneſſe, and Abſolute Soveraignity; and that we think him worthy of all Honour, Love, and Service. GOD is not truly honoured, when we make not an Oblation of the beſt things to him; for he who *is Authour of all* ſhould be *ſerved with he beſt*, or elſe he is badly requited: And con-

consequently he is never truely Honoured or Worshipped but when we make an *oblation of our whole selves* to him. *I beseech you therefore Brethren*, saith St. *Paul*, *by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to GOD, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this World, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of GOD.* Rom 12. 1, 2. Now what is it to make a *Sacrifice of our selves:* but only to *Walk with GOD*, for who *Walketh with GOD* as we have shewed, *Sacrifices his understanding to God* to *Believe* what *he reveales*, and to *Contemplate what he does*; he *Sacrificeth his will* to be entirely regulate by *his Laws*, his Affections to be placed or displaced according to his Order; and in a word, his whole Life and all its Operations to set forward the purposes of his Counsel and the Glory of his Name; Which indeed is a most *Reasonable Service*, for what lesse can be payed to him who is the *Authour and preserver of our Beeing, and gives us whatever we enjoy?* It is also agreeable to his Word, nay the very thing it calls for (which perhaps is true meaning of the *Apostles* λογικη λατρεια) for the very scope of the *Scripture* is to teach us this and to obliege us

us thereto. Finally it is moſt acceptable. GOD is very well pleaſed with theſe *Spiritual Sacrifices*, they have an *Odour of ſweet Smell with him*: But if they be wanting that thing which is ſavoury; if we do not *walk cloſely and conſtantly with God* as above, though we would bring never ſo many *Burnt Offerings and Calves of a Year old, Thouſand of Rams, and ten thouſand Rivers of Oyl, yet He would not regard them. Sacrifice and Offering thou didſt not deſire, Burnt Offering and Sin Offering thou haſt not required; then ſaid I, Lo I come, in the Volume of the Book it is written of Me, I delight to do thy will, O my GOD, yea thy Law is within my Heart.* Pſal. 40. 6. 7. *Let none think, ſaith* Lactantius, *that GOD requires Victims, Incenſe,* Divine *Donations, &c. For if he be not capable of Hunger, Thirſt, Cold, neither hath the Deſire of Earthly things, he will not uſe theſe and the like which are brought unto the Temples: but as Corporeal Beings require things of the like Nature, ſo a Spiritual Sacrifice is only neceſſary to be offered to a Spiritual Being. What GOD hath given to Man for his uſe he himſelf needs not; and beſides the whole World is his, and the fulneſs thereof: he needs not a Temple, who hath the World for his dwelling place nor an Image, or Statue who is* Inſt: Ep. Cap 2.

incomprehenſible; he ſtands not in need of Lamps and Earthly Lights, who hath kindled the Sun and the reſt of the Stars for Mans behoof; what is it therefore, ſaith he, *which GOD requireth of Man, but the* inward Worſhip *of the mind ſeing He himſelf is pure and Holy, for theſe things which are wrought by the Hands, and which are without the Man, is no true or proper Sacrifice; neither that which is taken out of the Coffer, but which cometh from the Heart; nor what is offered by the Hand, but by the Soul. This is a true Sacrifice, when the Soul offereth it ſelf unto GOD: For what ſignifieth other Sacrifices? What doth incenſe, what do Garments, and Gold, and Silver and Precious ſtones profit, if the Worſhippers mind be not holy and pure? 'Tis only Righteouſneſs which GOD ſeeks after, 'Tis in this that the* True Worſhip *of GOD doth conſiſt. The true Worſhippers of GOD, ſaith CHRIST, ſhall Worſhip him in Spirit and Truth, for the Father ſeeketh ſuch to Worſhip him.* And what is it to *Worſhip GOD in Spirit and Truth*, but to worſhip him by a *truly holy Life*, and an *upright walking with him?* In this is his Delight, and whoſoever taketh this way to pleaſe him, ſhall be *counted worthy of the Kingdom of GOD. Enoch* walked with GOD, and it's ſaid, GOD took him, that is, he took him out of this wretched Life, unto his Heavenly

Heavenly Glory, And all who tread the ſame paths, ſhall meet with the ſame Reward. GOD will take every one to himſelf who *walketh with GOD*, though not after the ſame manner. Death puts a ſtop to our *Walking with Men*, and forces us and them to part: but it doth not break off our *Walking with GOD*, it doth unite us more firmly to him, this fellowſhip which we thus begin here, reſults into an *Eternal Friendſhip* and *Society* in the other World.

CHAP III.

Of theſe Words, And this Stone which I have ſet for a Pillar, ſhall be GODS Houſe, *The Reaſon and Meaning of them.*

GOD is to be Worſhipped not only in *Private* but in *Publick*, he is not only to be Owned and Acknowledg'd a part, by our ſelves in Secret, but ought to be profeſſed openly before all the World, by the Performance of ſuch things as Reaſon and the univerſall Conſent of Mankind hath eſtabliſhed, to be publick Teſtimonies of our Alleagiance to him.

He who doth not this Laſt, can never be very ſincere in the Firſt; neither will GOD own ſuch to be *true Worſhippers of him*, who do not avowedly profeſſe him before Men, according to that of our *Saviour*, *whoſoever ſhall confeſſe me before Men, him ſhall the Son of Man alſo confeſſe before the Angels of God; but he that denyeth me before Men, ſhall be denyed before the Angels of God.* Luke. 12. 8. The very Light of Nature teacheth this, and therefore it is that when *Jacob* here did Solemnly take the *LORD to be his GOD*, he did not only engage himſelf to that *Inward Spiritual Worſhip*, which is acted within a Man's own ſelf, whereof we have ſpoken already; but alſo he binds Himſelf to that *Outward and Viſible Worſhip*, which is tranſacted by things without the Man, that it may be manifeſt to all the World that he Honoured and Adored this GOD. *This ſtone*, ſaith he, *which I have here ſet up for a Pillar, ſhall be GOD'S houſe*, that is, here in this place where I erect this Stone, when I come back I will build and conſecrat a Houſe to my GOD, for the Honour of his Name, and the Celebrating of his Worſhip, where I will Call upon him and Pray unto him. The Reaſon why he pitched upon this particular place, was becauſe GOD had made it emi-

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nent by ſo ſignal an appearance unto him, as we read before; and what moved him to build a houſe to GOD; was becauſe this, was univerſally agreed to, as an Act of Honour due unto GOD, and as an proper inſtance whereby men ſignify their Homage to him.

This which *Jacob Vowed* here, gives us Occaſion to ſpeak of *Churches*, or *conſecrated places*, *of Prayer*, and of *publick Worſhip.*

SECTION I.

Of Churches or Places Conſecrat to GOD, the Origine and Neceſſity thereof, what Regard and Reverence ſhould be payed them.

AND Firſt, as it is an *univerſal Cuſtome* all the World over, to erect *Temples* and to *Conſecrat places* for the Honour and Service of GOD: So this cuſtome is moſt Ancient. At preſent there are not only *Churches* throughout all the *Chriſtian World*: but *Mahumetans* and *Pagans* alſo have *Temples* and *Religious houſes* of one ſort or another, and it was ſo from the very beginning. It would ſeem that even our *Firſt Parents* in *Paradiſe* had ſome more peculiar place for preſenting themſelves before

fore GOD; *Gen* 3. 8. And after the *Fall* 'tis certain, that there was a Particular place ſet apart for the *Worſhip of GOD*, whither *Abel* and *Cain* brought their ſacrifices; *Noah* came no ſooner forth of the *Arke*, but he built an *Altar* to the LORD: and in like manner we read of all the *Patriarchs* that where ever they ſojourned they built Altars, which were uſually ranged about either with Trees or Stones, where they and their Family *Worſhipped GOD*, and performed all their Solemn Acts of devotion; their wandring courſe of Life would not allow them better; the *Tabernacle* which *Moſes* pitched in the Wilderneſs, was the firſt houſe of GOD we read of, which was covered and adorned with Art, and it was followed and imitated by that magnificent Temple which which *Soloman* built: Where all who lived at *Jeruſalem*, and near it, reſorted for the *Worſhipping of GOD*; and whither all the *Males* even in the remoteſt parts of the Kingdom, were oblidged to come up, at leaſt thrice a year. But though 'twas not lawfull to offer Sacrifice except in that one place, yet there was every where beſides both in Towns and Villages, in the Cities and open Fields, *Synagogues*, and *Oratories*, where people came to *Pray to GOD* and

and to joine with others in His *Worſhip*, and to be inſtructed in *His will.* Of *Synagogues* there are frequent mention in the *New Teſtament*, and by ſeverall things it may be collected that there were of them during the *firſt Temple:* but of *Oratories*, or places for Prayer, we read not ſo often, yet they be ſometimes ſpoken of, as particularly, *Luke* 6. 12. where it is ſaid, our *Saviour went into a mountain to pray and continued all night in Prayer to GOD*; but the Original will rather bear *in the Houſe or Place of Prayer.* So likewiſe, *Acts* 16. 13. 'tis ſaid of *Paul* and others, that were with him, being come to *Philippi* of *Macedonia*, *they went on the Sabbath day out of the city by a River ſide, where Prayer was wont to be made*, or where there was an uſuall *Oratory.* Thus it is certain that 'twas frequent every where and in every Nation, to conſecrate and ſet a part Places and Houſes for the *Worſhip* and *Service of GOD*: 'tis well conjectured by the Learned Mr. *Mede*, from *Joſh:* 22. 16. that theſe Lands and Countries were reputed unclean, where there was no ſuch Conſecrate or Devoted Places.

Now whither Men had an expreſſe Poſitive Precept, for the erecting houſes to GOD, and conſecrating ſuch places to him, or if they were meerly prompted thereto by the

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light of Nature, and the Stength of Reaſon, it doeth not very clearly appear. But however it is certain, that GOD did very much approve thereof; not only by allowing his moſt eminent Servants to continue in the uſe and practice of this thing: but alſo by requiring it of them. Thus GOD was ſo well pleaſed with *Noahs building him an altar*, that 'tis ſaid *he ſmelled a ſweet ſavour therefrom*; *Gen.* 8. 21. and 35. 1. we have God putting *Jacob* in mind of the *Vow* which he here made, and requiring him to make performance thereof in this very particular. When it firſt came into *Davids* Heart to build an houſe unto the LORD, the motion did ſo pleaſe GOD, that he ſent *Nathan* the Prophet to tell him, *that for this he would make a ſure covenant with him, and eſtabliſh the Crown and Throne upon him, and his houſe for ever; though for reaſons he would not let him build the houſe, but deferred it to his Son Solomon.* 2 *Sam:* 7. And we muſt not look upon *Temples*, as a *Legall Ceremonie* agreeable only to the Times of the *Old Teſtament*, not proper or neceſſary now: for though *GOD dwelleth not in Temples made with mens hands*, and that his Worſhip is not fixed to one particular place, as 'twas of old, yet it's no leſſe neceſſary now then formerly, to

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ſet a part Places and to conſecrate Houſes for the publick worſhip of GOD, that hereby he may be the more ſolemnly acknowledg'd, & that his Worſhip may be gone about with the greater Decency, Gravity, and Conveniency.

Theſe were the *Reaſons*, no doubt which moved Men to this Act firſt, and their Strength and Force is as great now, and as binding as ever. Wherefore the *Apoſtles*, and *firſt Chriſtians*, even ſuch as was moſt zealous againſt *Judaiſme*, did not think the uſe of Temples to be aboliſhed by the *Chriſtian Law*: but did continue the uſe of them, and were carefull to conſecrate and ſet apart *Churches* where ever they made converts and did propagate the Goſpel. For though the ontward ſtate of *Chriſtians* was then but mean and though they were alſo lyable to many perſecutions, yet they wanted not Houſes for that Worſhip and ſervice of God which was peculiar to the Goſpel. This the Learned Man formerly mentioned, hath made very evident; and it appears clearly from 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. and from theſe ſalutations to particular *Churches* of ſuch and ſuch a houſe.

At firſt *Temples* and *Religious Places* were but mean, plain, and ſimple, without any great ornament: what the *Patriarchs* uſed ſeems to have been no other then open un-

covered places, ſet about with trees or Stones agreeable to their own way of living, which was not conſtant or ſettled in any one place; for they dwelt in tents only and removed from place to place. There be ſome remainders of ſuch kind of ſimple *Oratories*, yet to be ſeen in many places of this Kingdome. But as People became more fixt and ſettled, and as they farther improved in art and cunning, ſo they uſed to take greater pains in adorning their temples and religious houſes: and judg'd it to be their glory, to have them Stately and magnificent. *David* was aſhamed that he himſelf ſhould dwell in a houſe of *Cedar*, while the *Ark* of the LORD was only within *Curtains*. And GOD complained by the Prophet *Haggai*, that the *People* who returned from the *Captivity*, ſhould have dwelt in *Cieled Houſes* themſelves while the Temple of the Lord lay waſt and unrepaired. The *Churches* of the firſt *Chriſtians* 'tis like indeed were not very fine, nor could much better be expected from them, if we conſider the meanneſſe and poverty of their State, and what hazards they run by offering to meet together at all. They were then neceſſitate to content themſelves with any place, though it had not the conveniency and adornments which they wiſhed: but ſo

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ſoon as the Emperours turned Chriſtians, and that the publick exerciſe of the *Chriſtian Religion* was allowed, then *Churches* were every where built Stately and magnificent. They did not then proceed by the ſcant rule of meer neceſſity, but rendred them not only convenient for themſelves: bnt ſuch as might ſpeak out the greatneſſe and glory of that God whom they adored. And though it cannot be denyed but that there may be an exceſſe in adorning Churches, when more is beſtowed on them then on the poor which are GOD'S living Temples; yet certainly to have no regard of them, and to grudge any coſt upon them, is an other extreme much more to be condemned; ſeing GOD hath been ſo bountiful to us, and to enrich this World for our uſe not only with neceſſaries, but with comforts, and to make it not only convenient, but alſo very beautiful, pleaſant and delightful: therefore I think gratitude ſhould oblidge us, to make an acknowledgement hereof, by adorning his temples, and taking care that theſe places of his *ſpecial preſence*, have all the ornament and comlineſſe, which our State and Country will allow. Sure by all the rules of the World, it cannot be judged otherwayes then a contempt of GOD, or at the leſt

ſmall eſteem of him, when his houſes are the worſt of the Land, as is uſually to be obſerved throughout this *Kingdom*: nay in many places are to be ſeen *Stables* and *Byers* much more neat and handſome then the *Churches* beſide them, which certainly is a moſt ſhamefull thing, and cannot but expoſe us to the contempt of all ſtrangers. What a ſhame? and how unworthy a thing is it to be more curious about the apartment of our beaſts, then the houſe of our GOD? GOD ordered his *S*on to be born in a *S*table and in a Manger, to teach us humility and to be content with a mean *S*tate, but not to make us humble him thereafter by lodging him no better then our beaſts. *I* am ſory it ſhould be ſaid, becauſe 'tis our ſhame, but it is true that we have many Churches, which look rather like barns byres and ſtables, and would be as proper for that uſe, then what they are deſign'd for. God did expreſly prohibite under the law, the dedicating the worſt things unto him, and I cannot underſtand what precept or example can be pretended forwarranding this under the *Goſpel*: I would think *Nature* as well as *Religion* doth teach the contrary. GOD and Kings ſhould be alwayes honoured with what is beſt, and there is reaſon that the *Courts* of both be beautified and

and Adorned with State and Splendour, that thereby that Reverence and Reſpect which is due from all who approach them, may be engendered, nouriſhed & increaſed. But by *Adorning of Churches*, I doe not mean what is in uſe in the *Romiſh Church*, *viz.* Images, Lamps, Puppets, rare and various Curioſities, *&c.* which are of no uſe in the *Service of God*, and do but divert the minds of thoſe who come up to Worſhip; gaudy ſhews are not *the true ornament of Churches* but what makes them Grave, Auguſt, and Venerable. And therefore the ſame Rules are to be obſerved in building of Churches, which Wiſe and Diſcreet Perſons follow in their Cloaths, who ſeek out what is Decent and Uſeful, and are careful to ſhun both what is neſty and courſe, and alſo, what is Gaudy and Vain; becauſe the one ſpeaks out *a mean ſordide Spirit*, and the other too *much lightneſs and childiſhneſs*.

But whatever *Churches* be as to their *external matter or form*, whither they be well or ill adorned, there is *a holy reſpect and reverence due unto them*; their having or wanting the *externall Ornaments* of Art or Beauty, does not alter their Nature, or make them more or leſſe the *Houſe of GOD*, which is the thing their very name imports, for *Kirk or Church* is

is from the *Greek* κυριακὸν which is as much *as the Lords.* And upon this account they ſhould be had in *reverence*, more then for their Outward Pomp and ſplendour. Every thing which relates to GOD *is Sacred*, and ſhould be reverently dealt with, and particularly *his Temples*; wherefore it is that the *Wiſe-man* adviſeth, *to keep our foot when we go to the houſe of GOD. Eccl.* 5. 1. He there alludes to the common Cuſtome of *pulling off the ſhoes in token of reſpect and reverence*, And though that particular Act be now out-dated and worn out of faſhion, yet ſtill 'tis neceſſary to carry reverently towards them; For GOD himſelf commands it, ſaying, *ye ſhall reverence my Sanctuary*, and the reaſon he gives is, *becauſe I am the LORD*; *Lev.* 19. 30. Now this Reverence to the *Houſe of GOD*, was no *Temporal Ceremonie* peculiar to the *time of the Law:* but even a *Moral Duty*, to be continued as long as it is neceſſary to keep up the uſe of *Churches* and *conſecrated Places*, which will be ever neceſſary in this World; as doth appear from our Saviour's Zeal, *in ſcourging out of the Temple*, ſuch as have profaned it, *by buying or ſelling therein.* And the *Apoſtle Se. Paul* inveighs againſt the *Corinthians* for that abuſe which crept in amongſt them in the *Celebration of the Lords Supper*, *whereby in eating*

ing every one, did take before another, and one was hungry and another drunken: because as he tells them 'twas not only contrary to the Nature and Purport of the *Sacrament*, but also a contempt of the house of GOD, and a want of reverence towards it. *What*, saith he, *have ye not houses to eat or drink in? Or despise ye the Church of GOD;* 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. And when the same Apostle urgeth the not *defiling the Body*, because it is the *Temple of GOD*; it is evident that he takes it as a certain and undoubted Truth, that what is the *Temple of GOD* should not be prophaned, or else his Argument would not be good or valid. Through all the World it is a custome to respect the Presence Chamber of Kings, and such places wherein they use to appear in Majesty and State, and to behave Reverently towards them, even when they are not Personally present: And how much greater Reason is there to pay the like Respect and Reverence to the *House of GOD*, and those Places where he uses to meet and bless his People, and where he is alwayes specially present, by the Attendance of his *Angels and Ministring Spirits?* For that Churches are thus Honoured with the *special Presence of GOD*, seems to be very evident from the *Scripture*, both of the *Old and New Testament.*

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GOD indeed is not in *Temples* ſo as to be included in them; we muſt not think that his *Eſſence* can be ſhut up any where, wherefore in this 'tis true, *that He dwelleth not in Temples made with Mens hands*; Nay, *the very Heaven of Heavens do not contain Him*: But how ever it is certain that He is and may be ſaid to be more *preſent in his Temples and Churches*, then in other places.

When GOD is ſaid thus to be more preſent in one place then another, it is either when there are ſome more viſible Effects of His Preſence by the conferring of ſpecial Bleſſings; or when his *Heavenly Hoſt* is there: for ſo *Jacob* here declared *GOD to be in this place*, becauſe he ſaw the *Angels of GOD aſcending and deſcending*. Now that GOD is preſent in his *Churches*, the firſt way appears from *Exod.* 20. 24. Where GOD ſaith expreſly, *in all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bleſſe thee*, upon which account the *Tabernacle*, was called *the Tabernacle of the Congregation or meeting*, not of Mens meeting, but of GOD'S meeting with Men. The like Promiſe our *LORD* gives us, *Mat.* 18. 20. Where he ſaith *where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them.* And that he is alſo preſent the other way, *viz.* by the attendance

dance of his *Angels* and *Heavenly Hoſt*, was not only the conſtant Opinion of the *Jews*, concerning their *Temple*; but is alſo expreſſed plainly by *Solomon*, *Eccl.* 5. 6. When he ſayes concerning our behavionr in the *Houſe of GOD*, *Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thy fleſh to ſin, neither ſay thou before the Angels that it was an errour.* And in like manner, St. *Paul* pleads againſt the *undecency of Womens being uncovered in the Church*, *becauſe of the preſence of Angels: for this cauſe*, *ſaith he*, *ought the Woman to have power over her head*, *becauſe of the Angels*; 1 *Cor.* 11. 10. Chriſt telleth us, *Mat.* 23. 21 *That God dwelleth in his Temple*, and how can he be ſaid to do it more there then elſe-where, but this way.

Now that we may make what hath been ſaid uſefull to direct our practice, we will proceed to draw ſome inferences. And firſt it teacheth us, that it is the duty of all thoſe who would *Worſhip GOD* aright and who would manifeſt themſelves to be his *Devoted Servants*, to take care to conſecrate places for his Service, and to erect *Churches for his Worſhip* where there are none; and to contribute chearfully to the maintaining and keeping them up where they are: for the Honour and Glory of God requires it, and *Nature* as well as *Scripture* teacheth this to be a *proper*

Act of Homage and acknowledgement due to GOD. It is the Duty of all who own and believe in him, to meet frequently together to *Worship Him*, and that Worship which is due unto him, can never be rightly performed, with *requisite solemnity* and *decency*, unless there be particular places *Consecrate* for it. And if there be no care taken, what sort of places these are, if they be suffered to be Mean, Nasty, Sordide, and Slovenly, it will very much lessen *Peoples* esteem for GOD and his Service: for whilst Men are in this World, they will be still creatures of Sense, and their Apprehension of things will be alwayes according to the *outward impression* they make upon their Senses. How comes it that the *meanner sort* especially, are lesse awed in the *Church*, then when they are in the houses of Lords and Gentlemen? but because in these they see something of Grandeur, but in the other nothing finer then what they have at home in their own silly Cottages.

Secondly, what *Jacob Vowed* and *resolved on* here, may be a fit Patern and Precedent to all the great Ones of the World, whose Quality and Condition makes it requisite for them to have great and Magnificent dwellings: *viz.* That they allow some parti-

particular room in theſe their Dwellings, and Palaces, for a private Chappel and *Houſe of GOD*, wherein they and their Family may dayly meet together to *Worſhip Him.* If they do not think their houſes and dwellings convenient or anſwerable to their Grandeur unleſſe there be in them ſeveral Apartments for ſeverall Offices; me thinks alſo they ſhould judge them defective, if they cannot allow one ſpare Room to be reſerved for GOD and his dayly ſervice. We would not have any believe us ſo *Superſtitious*, as to think no *Prayers acceptable*, but ſuch as are made in the *Houſe of GOD* or conſecrated Places; for without doubt, God will hear all who call upon him in *ſincerity & truth*, whereſoever they are: but yet there is great conveni ency & decency, in appropriating one particular place for the performance both of our *private and more Solemn Devotions* with the reſt of the Family; for then we are not ſo lyable to diſturbance and diſtractions: & therefore if our ſtate & condition allow it, it were commendable to ſet apart ſome particular room of our houſe for this end only. It is not to be expected that the generality can win to to this, yet thoſe of the beſt Quality I think may, and if they may, they ought too: & if they would thus give GOD an Intereſt in

their Houſes and dwelling Places, we may very confidently ſay 'twould be their beſt ſecurity, *Except the Lord keep the houſe, they labour in vain that keep it*; and he would not fail to preſerve and maintain that Houſe and Family where he is ſo highly Honoured and devotely ſerved. But alas this is little looked to now a dayes! There be very few who regard much the *intereſſing God in their houſes*, by the *conſecrating* them or any part of them to him; and which is farr worſe, who take any care to have *Him Worſhipped* in their Families either inſeparate or comon Rooms. This part of *Religion* is but little in requeſt amongſt the *Grandees* of the World, it is laid aſide as an Antick and unfaſhionable thing: and as their practice in other things is too ordinarly a Law unto the inferiour Sort of People, ſo 'tis very much to be regrated that it is ſo here. How ſeriouſly the *Heads* of Families *Worſhip GOD* in their *Cloſets*, we do not, and we cannot know; but 'tis too apparent, that there is but little care taken to have him Worſhipped decently by all the Family together; nay, this is now ſcarce lookt upon by any as their Duty; *Joſhua* thought it incumbent upon him, when he ſaid, *as for me and my houſe we will ſerve the* LORD; as if he had ſaid, *not I in my ſingle*

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capacity, but I alſo with my whole Family; and not I only by my ſelf alone in private, but I alſo with all my Houſe; we ſhall be carefull to *ſerve Him* and Devotely to *call upon Him:* which certainly every one whoſe heart is ſincere with GOD will endeavour to imitate. *Family Worſhip* becomes now the more neceſſary, that there is no *publick Worſhip Evening and Morning* in our *Churches*; if this were, Maſters of Families ſhould with their Families attend it, and ſo the want of the other might be much excuſed: but ſeing we are not ſo happy as to have a *dayly publick worſhip*, every Family ſhould ſerve God apart. And though as we have ſaid, there be ſome reaſon for *ſetting apart particular Rooms*, for the exerciſe of *Family Worſhip*, by ſuch as can do it conveniently; yet the want of ſuch conveniency; needs neither be a hinderance to this neceſſary *ſerving of GOD*, nor will it excuſe the neglect thereof. When we cannot ſerve God as we would, we ought to do it as we may, when we honour him as far as we are able, he will not impute the want of what is without our reach as a ſin to us. Though there be no Room nor apartment in our houſe, but what of neceſſity muſt be put to common uſe; yet let us not neglect to offer unto GOD

GOD Evening and Morning the Sacrifices of Prayer and Thanksgiving, and they ſhall certainly find acceptance in his Sight. By doing this our Houſe and Family ſhall be a *little Sanctuary* unto GOD, who will graciouſly vouchſafe to dwell in them, and to eſtabliſh with us his *Comfortable Preſence*, which ſhould afford us greater Peace and quiet and Satisfaction, and ſhould prevent thoſe Unnatural Tarres and Diſorders, which fall out too commonly amongſt thoſe of the ſame Family. If GOD were much among them, theſe things would not be; and he is not among them, becauſe his Name is not *called upon*, nor his *Worſhip obſerved* by them.

Thirdly, we may ſee by what hath been ſaid, how much it is our Duty to frequent *the Houſe of of GOD*; for as it is *Religion* to erect *Churches and Temples*, ſo 'tis with a Deſign to uſe them, and to come up unto them *to call upon GOD*, and to hear what he will ſay to us. When *Jacob* reſolved to *build GOD an Houſe*, he did not mean to ſhut the door thereof, and to be a Stranger thereunto; but to viſit it often that he might have *Opportunity of meeting and converſing with His GOD*. If civility and kindneſſe draw us to the Houſe of our Neighbour; and if ſuch as are about *Kings Courts*, be oblidg'd to come and attend

tend the *King's perſon* at thoſe hours when the Court opens up, or that he preſents himſelf; ſure we ſhould think our ſelves much more oblidg'd to come up to the *Houſe of GOD*, and to wait upon him at theſe times and hours which he hath appointed for meeting with us. What a Honour and happineſſe is it to have the freedom to ſtand in *his preſence*, and the Liberty to ſpeak unto Him? *The Pſalmiſt*, it ſeems, thought it a great happineſſe when he cryed out, *Bleſſed is the Man whom thou chooſeſt, O LORD, and cauſeſt to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts: we ſhall be ſatisfied with the goodneſſe of thy houſe, even of thy holy Temple.* Pſ. 65. 4. And again, *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts, My ſoul longeth, yea fainteth for the Courts of the LORD. Bleſſed are they that dwell in thy Houſe, they will be ſtill praiſing thee.* Pſ. 84. Hereby it appears that he looked upon the *Prieſts* and *Levits* as very happy, whoſe Office oblidg'd them to a *continuall attendance on GOD'S Houſe*; their Lot he thought was worthy of his ambition: for though he was a *King*, and upon that account might have commanded the Chiefeſt Pleaſures and Delights of the Sons of *Men*, yet he undervalued them all in compariſon of the Priviledge of being in *GOD'S Houſe*. *A day in thy Courts*, ſaith he,

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is better then a thousand; I had rather be a door keeper in the house of my GOD, then to dwell in tents of Wickedness. This favour he sought above all things, and preferred before all things, as he plainly tells us, *Ps.* 27. 4. where he saith, *One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the* LORD, *all the dayes of my life, to behold the Beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his Temple.* And certainly whosever comes up to the *House of GOD*, with a sincere Love to and desire after Him, shall receive much Comfort and Good thereby. It is not an Honour only, but an advantage also to be in *GOD'S presence*: for he still leaves a Blessing behind him and hath expressly promised to meet with us in *His House to blesse us, as you have it*, *Exod.* 20. 24. In token her eof the *Ministers of GOD* are appointed *to blesse in His Name*, as appeared from *Deut.* 10. 8. which in all Reason must be extended to *Evangelical Ministers*, seing GOD'S Goodnesse is not narrower, but larger then it was of old, We are not then to look upon *Pastoral Benedictions*, especially in the solemn assemblies, only as intimations of their own good wishes; but as *Authoritative declarations* of the Good will of GOD, which are effectuall upon such as are worthy; See *Mat.* 10. 13.

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Let none therefore withdraw from the Houſe of GOD, but let all accept of all Occaſions of coming up thereto; as *David* who tells us, *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, let us go into the Houſe of the LORD. Pſ.* 122. 1. For our coming ſhall not be in vain, GOD will not ſuffer ſuch as ſincerely ſeek him to return without profite. *I ſaid not to any of the ſeed of Jacob ſeek ye Me in vain. Iſa.* 45. 19. They ſpeak Ignorantly and unadviſedly, who ſay, they will not be the better by *coming to the Church*, and that they may profite themſelves as well at home: For ſeing GOD hath promiſed to be there, ſuch as are truly diſpoſ'd and ſeek Him in ſincerity, ſhall undoubtedly find Him; they ſhall feel the *influences of His Spirit moving on their Hearts*, and ſhall be made to taſte and ſee his Goodneſs, that by Experience as well as by Reaſon they may underſtand *it is good for them to draw near to God.* It is true God is not tyed to the *Church* or *Publick meetings*, but may & will manifeſt himſelf to his Servants alſo in other places; yet they are not likelieſt to find him at home, who ſtay there out of a contempt of the *Church*, which is the place he himſelf hath appointed for a *Solemn meeting* with his People. We ought not to deſpiſe or neglect thoſe *means of Comfort and Happineſſe* which

GOD hath prescribed, but to use them Piously and Thankfully; waiting humbly upon Him, that in and by them he may blesse us. 'Tis a tempting of GOD, to expect or desire he should shew himself or conveigh his blessings by wayes extraordinary, while the ordinary means may be had. What is better then to *find GOD?* What is more desireable then to receive *Expressions of His favour?* And where shall we seek him? Or where may we with greater assurance expect these, then where he hath promised to be found, to wit, in *His House and Ordinances?* Let us then resort thither, and we shall find *Him whom our Soul Loveth*, who shall resolve our Doubts, and Advise us in the Way we should take; he shall ease our Hearts of our *Secret Grief, comfort us* against all our Troubles, and shall Refresh us with new Strength and vigour, to *enable us to endure patiently to the End of our Race*, that so we may *obtain the Crown of life.* I have known some (and I believe 'twill be found nothing extraordinary) who upon their coming to *Church*, have received a Resolution of their *Particular Doubts*, Comfort for their *Particular Troubles*, and who when they little expected it have had their present Case touched as if the *Preacher* had mainly aimed at them, when yet he neither

neither knew them, nor intended them. Weak *Preachers* will drop now and then good and uſefull *Speeches*, and though their Diſcourſe in the groſſe be not Learned nor Eloquent, yet ſometimes they let fall ſhort ſentences which may be, and often prove more beneficial then more fine and Elaborat Sermons. I have known Digreſſions in Sermons, what is uſually termed a running from the Text, more pertinent to ſome of the *Hearers*, then if the *Miniſter* had kept more cloſe to his Subject, becauſe they were thereby ſtruck home, and hit upon ſome Particulars of their Condition which concerned them to underſtand, and to be rightly inform'd of. If then Men would but lay aſide their *prejudices*, put themſelves in a *Sutable Diſpoſition*, and liſten attentively, they might and without doubt ſhould be Edified and Bettered by *coming to Church*. The apprehended weakneſs of him who is to Officiat, ought to be no diſcouragement, for GOD often uſeth *weak and mean things* to effectuat *great Matters*, & by what we account the *fooliſhneſſe of preaching*, *he doth ſave thoſe that believe*. Though there were no Sermon, 'twould be our Duty nevertheleſs to *come up to Church*, that thereby we may teſtify our homage to GOD and acknowledgment

of him: but however for our Encouragement, if we be ſincerely deſirous *to hear what GOD the LORD will ſpeak, he will ſpeak good one way or other.*

In the laſt place, when we come *up to the Houſe of GOD*, we ought to be careſull to lay aſide every thing which may offend, and be unbecoming *ſo Divine and holy a Preſence*: while we are there, we ſhould behave our ſelves *decently and reverently*; for if the preſence of *Kings* over-awe us, how much more ſhould the *preſence of GOD* and *Angels?* If it be improper and moſt unſeemly to appear any ways light frothy & impertinent before *Kings*, eſpecially when they are ſitting in *Majeſty*, and *State*, it is ſure much more unworthy to be guilty of Indiſcretion in the *Houſe of GOD*, which is the *Place where God is alwayes preſent*, and that *in Majeſty* and *State* too by the attendance of *Angels* and *Miniſtring Spirits*. It were far better not to approach the *Houſe of GOD*, then not to be reverent when we are in it: he who ſlayes away is but guilty of neglect, which though it be a great ſin, yet 'tis not ſo great as inſolency & a downright affronting of GOD, which he is guilty of who laugheth, Sporteth, talketh idlely, or any ways playeth the Fool within the *Church*, or ſleepeth and ſnorteth away the time there-

therein to the *Scandal* and diſturbance of others; or who abſtracts his mind from the *Service of GOD*, and imployes his thoughts in Worldly Matters. *Such* behaviour, and irreverent Carriage cannot but highly provock God, and obſtruct our own Good and Benefite. If we do not meet with GOD when we *come to Church*, if he do not bleſſe us, if we find our ſelves no whit bettered, the reaſon muſt be our Irreverent and unſeemly Behaviour, or ſome indiſpoſition in our ſelves, for GOD is *alwayes ready and willing to manifeſt Himſelf.* Wherefore if we would *ſee the Beauty of the Lord in his Temple*; or if we would *taſte the goodneſs of his houſe*; we muſt guard againſt thoſe things which may *provock him to withdraw himſelf from us.* And muſt labour ſo to pleaſe him by a Humble, Devout and Reverent Behaviour, as that he may condeſcend to *come and manifeſt himſelf to our ſouls for our edification and comfort* And to what purpoſe is it *to come*, if you be not reſolved to do Reverence to *GOD by coming?* what a diſhonour is done to the *Houſe of GOD?* When you only come up unto it, becauſe you know not otherwiſe how to ſpend the Time, or when you make it only a place for meeting with your neighbours where you talke about Newes and other

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Worldly Affairs, and where you may be informed what Garb and Dreſſe is moſt in Faſhion, or where you may Sleep and take your reſt, or where without Diſturbance you may ruminate on your Buſineſs and projects. as St. *Paul* ſaid to the *Corinthians*, *have ye not houſes to eat and drink in*, ſo I ſay, have ye not other places to do theſe things in? *Or do ye indeed deſpiſe the Church of GOD*, Conſider I pray you, *that the Church* (*as St. Chriſoſtome ſaith* *) *is no Bar-*

* *Vid. Mede, lib.* 2. *p.* 439

bers or Drug-ſellers Shop, nor any other Crafts-mans or Merchants Work-houſe in the Market place; but the place of Angels, the place of Areh-Angels, the Palace of GOD, Heaven it ſelf; think near whom thou ſtandeſt, with whom thou invocateſt GOD; namely with Cherubims and Seraphims, and all the powers of Heaven: Conſider but what companions thou haſt: let it be ſufficient to perſwade thee to Sobriety, when thou remembreſt that thou who art compounded of Fleſh and Blood, art admitted with the incorporeal Powers to celebrate the common Lord of all: when thou goeſt into a King's Palace thou compoſeſt thy ſelf to Comelineſs in thy Habite, in thy lookes, in thy gate, and in all thy whole guiſe: but here is indeed the Palace of a King, and the like attendance to that in Heaven, and doſt thou laugh? &c. *I know well enough thou ſeeſt it not,*

not, but hear thou me, and know that Angels are every where, and that chiefly in the House of God, they attend upon their King, where all is filled with these incorporeal powers.

SECT. II.

Of Prayer.

HAving had occaſion to treat of *Churches* or Sacred places, I judge it neceſſary to ſubjoine ſome ſhort diſcourſe on Prayer, ſeing that *this* is the very uſe, & end of theſe: For upon this account the *Church* in Scripture is called *the Houſe of Prayer*. The very deſign of conſecrate houſes or Places, is that Men may have in them conveniency for Prayer; & thither men were wont to come, not only to joyne in the *publick Worſhip*, but alſo for the performance of their private Devotions. But becauſe our Lord perceived that the reſorting to ſuch publick Places, ſo often as we need to pray, might Miniſter to pride and vanity, which ſpoile the odour of our Prayers, and hinder their acceptance with GOD; therefore he hath adviſed us, *Mat. 6.* to chooſe out the moſt

moſt ſecret and retired Places, for our Private Prayers and addreſſes to GOD: and though the place we pray in, have not the Honour to be appropriate to GOD, yet our Prayers ſhall find acceptance, if they be ſincere and rightly qualified. Prayer doth in ſome ſenſe ſanctify the place, but the place can add no weight or worth to our Prayers. It may be more convenient for us to pray in one place more then another, but our Prayers will not be more acceptable to GOD upon the account of the place they are ſaid in. GOD is every where, and we may freely addreſſe our ſelves to him any where, and where ever Men lift up holy hands in Prayer without wrath or doubting they ſhall be heard. If Churches be imployed to any other uſe then prayer, and religious ſervices, they are profaned. See *Mark* 11. 15. but it is not neceſſary, nor expedient to goe to *Church* each time we pray to GOD. The *Church* ſhould be reſerved for *Publick Worſhip* chiefly, but as for what we do apart by our ſelves, we ought to ſeek out Places of the greateſt privacy to do it in, and as I ſaid in the former ſection, if our State would ſuffer it, 'twould be very proper and convenient to ſet apart one particular Room of our Houſe for this end, that

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we may perform our Devotions with the greater freedom, and be less lyable to disturbance, and those interruptions which persons usually meet with who want this conveniency.

But to leave the circumstance of the place, and to come to the thing it self. Prayer is a speciall part of *Divine Worship*, enjoined by clear precepts, recommended by the example of all holy Men, and so necessary that who prayeth not at all or but seldome, cannot be said to *Worship GOD*, whatever else they doe: For their other Acts cannot be properly referred to GOD, if they be not accompanied with Prayers. Our obligation to Prayer ariseth not from one, but from all the *Divine Attributes*; and by Prayer there is an acknowledgement of all of them: He who prayeth declareth *GOD'S Omnipresence*, *His Omniscience*, *His Omnipotence* and *All sufficiency, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.* But who neglecteth Prayer doth not believe these *Divine Perfections*, or doth not seriously consider them; he maketh no actuall acknowledgment of them, nay he lives in open defiance of them, and arrogates to himself an independency and self-sufficiency, which are GOD'S prerogative.

Again there can be no Intercourſe with GOD, but by the means of Prayer. Without Prayer we can never arrive at the end of Religion, *viz. Union with GOD*, and participation of the *Divine Nature*. He who is not exerciſed in Prayer hath his Heart alienat from GOD, and is wholly indiſpoted for receiving the Spirit of GOD, and the impreſſion thereof, without which there is no advancing towards perfection Prayer is by ſome compared to *Breathing*, and not unfitly; for what *that is* to the Body, Prayer is to the *Soul*; reſpiration is no more neceſſary to our Naturall Life, then Prayer to the *Spirituall* Life, for hereby it is preſerved: & as the ſtiffling our breath ends our Life, ſo the ceaſing to pray deſtroyes the life of God in the Soul. The body which breaths not has no ſenſe or feeling, nor is it capable of motion; even ſo the man who prayeth not, is without all due ſenſe of GOD, neither maketh he any motion towards him Prayer is a ſign of *Spirituall* Life, and ſhews a deſire and capacity to receive what is neceſſary to growth and perfection: and as the want of ſuch a deſire and capacity obſtructs the *communication of GOD'S Spirit*. ſo where this is he will certainly manifeſt his Love, and beſtow his Grace. *To him who hath* the deſire

ſire and capacity *ſhall be given. He who asketh ſhall receive, he who ſeeketh ſhall find, and who knocketh it ſhall be opened unto him.* Mat. 11.

But to make Prayer acceptable to GOD, and thus profitable to our ſelves, it muſt be rightly performed and duely qualified. true Prayer is alwayes acceptable as incenſe, and never failes to bring down a Bleſſing; but many deceive themſelves with a meer ſhew, they are contented that they ſeem to *Pray*, but do not *Pray* really: ſome Pray much, but yet are never a whit nearer GOD, nor move more forward in Holineſſe, which is both the undoubted *Sign*, and the certain *Effect* of *true Prayer*. We ought then not only to Pray, but to pray aright, elſe all the Labour we beſtow this way is in vain. *Ye ask*, ſaith *St. James*, *and ye have not*, why? *becauſe ye ask amiſs.*

Now that our Prayers may be proper Prayers and effectuall, *firſt*, We muſt take heed that they be the *Work of the Spirit*, and not the *Labour of the Lips*: For *GOD is a Spirit, and will be Worſhipped in Spirit and Truth*, That is, by free and proper Acts of the Mind and not by empty ſhews which have no Solidity or Reality in them. If our Hearts be removed, he cares not for our drawing near with our mouth, or the

honouring him with our Lips as we learn from *Isa.* 29. 13. To prostrate our Bodies before GOD, and to let our Minds rove and wander, is to offer a dead Sacrifice which is no *Reasonable, or acceptable Service*; to utter words which we do not understand, or whose meaning we attend not to, is not to pray but to prat, it is to bable without sense; to make a sound which signifies nothing and deserves no more to be regarded, then the pronunciation of Puppets and Mechanicall Engines, which is performed by Wheels, and Springs without understanding. Our Prayers are but bruitish gruntlings, if they come not from the Heart and be not performed by the understanding. Wherefore when we are to Pray, we should first fix our Spirits, and compose our Minds to a serious Attention, and should endeavour to wind up our Souls to that fervour and earnestnes which is Sutable to the weight and importance of Prayers: And to this purpose, 'twill be necessary to bestow some time in *Meditation*, and *Reading of the Scriptures*, or *some other devout book*.

Having thus reduced our Minds to a due Attention, and secured as much as possible against wandering thoughts; in the next place we must consider the *several parts of Prayers*; the

the Nature and Property of each, and the Affections ſutable thereto, and frame our Prayers accordingly: For they cannot be acceptable if lame and defective, nor though they have all neceſſary parts, if each part be not rightly Adjuſted and Properly qualified. To clear this better, we will touch a little on them;

The firſt part of Prayer is *Adoration* and *Invocation.* This we ſhould alwayes begin with, for as in our addreſſes to Kings and great Perſonages, we uſe firſt to do them reverence, and to teſtify their dignity before we preſent our requeſts: So in our addreſſes to GOD, we ſhould firſt adore his *Majeſty* and invocate his Audience. Now the right way to do this, is not to be accoaſt him with a heap of bigge tittles; but to call to mind his *incomprehenſible Nature, and Adorable perfections*, viſible in his *manifold Works.* And if our apprehenſions of GOD be worthy of him, we will be abaſhed at our ſelves as unfit for ſo great a preſence, and moſt unworthy to be regarded by one ſo highly exalted above all our thoughts: To expreſſe which and to cheriſh it too, 'tis requiſite to throw our ſelves in ſome humble poſture. Thus the *Publican* to ſignify his own vileneſs, and *GODS greatneſs*, he *ſtood*

a far off, and would not lift up his eyes, as one ashamed of himself. But left the reflecting upon *GODS Majesty* and *Greatness*, should take away the hopes of Acceptance, and rather fill us with dread then confidence in him; we muſt remember his Goodneſs, his Love, his Mercy, and how that he is reconciled to us in his *Son JESUS CHRIST.* Therefore our *Saviour* hath taught us to *draw near to GOD* as in a ſenſe of his *Ineffable Greatneſs* whoſe throne is in the Heavens, ſo under the notion of a Father who is alwayes ready and eaſie to be entreated: *When ye pray*, ſaith he, *ſay Our Father which art in Heaven; &c.*

Confeſſion is another part of Prayer. This muſt by no means be omitted, GOD requires it; the rules of Juſtice and Equitie make it neceſſary, and there is no Remiſſion without it; he who confeſſeth hath the promiſe of pardon, *but who covereth his Sins ſhall not proſper.* To perfom this aright we muſt conſider both our Generall and particular State, and make an acknowledgement of them: In the Generall we ought to acknowledge what is common to us with all others, that we are of a *rebellious Race, miſerably corrupted, and prone to all evil*; but we muſt not reſt here, but muſt ſubjoine alſo a *confeſſion*

feſſion of our own particular faults, all our ſinful inclinations and actual tranſgreſſions, with their Aggravating Circumſtances: for which purpoſe we ought to *ſearch our hearts*, to examine our Diſpoſitions, and to take account of our Lives. But if we make only a *ſimple Confeſſion*, it will avail us little; we muſt not confeſs our ſins to GOD, as uſual People do the offences they give one another, or ſome great Man, which they do clearly out of Complement, or out of Conſtraint to ſhun ſome preſent inconveniency, without any deteſtation of the thing: But as we muſt be ingenuous in *confeſſing our Sins*, ſo we ought to confeſſe them with ſorrow and contrition. *Confeſſion is a meer mockery, if it proceed not from an abhorrency at Sin*; and be not attended with indignation at our ſelves, and backed with unfeinged purpoſes to abandon Sin, and guard againſt it: wherefore when we confeſſe, 'twill be neceſſary to conſider how every ſinful act is a complex of Injuſtice, Ungratitude, Arrogancy, madneſs and Folly, that ſin is moſt loathſome in its Nature, and moſt miſcheivous in its Conſequences. But becauſe GOD requires us not to remember and confeſſe our Sins, that we may be filled with deſpair: But to ſtirr up in us deſires of Mercy, and to prepare us

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for it: So having humbled our Souls with the ſight of our ſins, and wrought our ſelves to an earneſt Deſire of being delivered from the ſtain and Guilt of them, we ſhould next ſupport our ſelves with the comfortable conſideration of *GODS infinite Mercy*, how that he is moſt ready and willing to forgive, and how that to make way for his Mercy to Sinners, he hath ſent his own Son to ſatisfy for our ſins, and to repair his Honour which by our ſins is affronted and baffled; we ſhould conſider that *JESUS CHRIST* is the *True Sacrifice and Propitiation for ſin*, which by Faith we ſhould offer up to GOD and thereupon both ask forgiveneſſe and confidently hope for it.

A third part of Prayer is *Petition* or a humble Repreſentation of our Deſires to GOD; which he calls for, to teach us our Dependance on him, that *'tis in him we live, move, and have our being*, and that we may acknowledge Him the Author and Giver of all good. To the right performance of this part, we muſt firſt have a ſenſe of our own indigency, and a ſtrong Faith in Gods Power and Goodneſs, in his Power that he is able, and in his goodneſſe that he is willing to give us what we aske: For 'tis a vain thing to ask of another what we think we need

need not, or what we may get without him; and 'tis no leſs vain to addreſs our ſelves to one in whom we have no Confidence, whoſe Power or Goodneſs we very much doubt. Now to perſwade us of GODS Power and Goodneſs, and of our own Miſery and Poverty, we need but to read the *Scripture*, call to mind the *Nature* and *Works of GOD*, and take an impartial view of our ſelves. *Secondly*, we ought to look to the Aime and Reaſon of our Deſires that we have a right end before us; for if we have an evil intention, our Deſires are ſinful and unworthy to be preſented to GOD, who is *moſt Juſt and Holy*, and who cannot be perverted from what is right. Our Deſires therefore muſt not *terminate* in our ſelves, we muſt not intend our own Honour, Glory, Pleaſure, &c. in this World; that muſt be the cheif end of our Deſires and Petitions, which is the laſt end of our Life and Beeing, viz. GOD himſelf and his Glory. This our *Saviour* teacheth us in that *ſhort Prayer* he preſcribed; for there we are commanded in the firſt place to Pray that *GODS name be hallowed, that his Kingdom may come*; But this doth not debarr us from reſpecting our own *Eternal Felicity*, for the Glory of GOD, which we

ſhould ſeek includes that; in ſeeking the Glory of GOD, we ſeek our own *Eternal intereſt*, and we cannot aime at Heaven without aiming at the *Glory of GOD:* theſe two are inſeparable. 3*ly*. We ought carefully to conſider the matter of our Requeſts, that in this alſo they be good and proper, that is, agreeable to the will of GOD; for it is not lawful for us to crave what he hath not approved. And therefore we muſt acquaint our ſelves well with the *Holy Scripture*, in which GOD hath revealed his Will, and thereby regulate all our Deſires: what he hath allowed we may, what he hath commanded, we ought to ask; but what he hath forbidden we ſhould pray againſt. From hence it follows. 4*ly*. That we ought to pray with all earneſtneſs for all *Spiritual Bleſſings:* but as for *Temporal things*, though we ſhould Pray for them too, yet not *Peremptorly*, but with a *Reſignation* to the wiſe Diſpoſal of *GOD'S Will:* the Reaſon of this Difference is, becauſe he hath abſolutely approved of *Spiritual Bleſſings*, but hath declared otherwiſe anent *Temporal Benefits*; and becauſe he hath made it alwayes neceſſary for us to be Good, Holy, Chaſte, Sober, Meek, *&c.* But it is not always expedient for us to have health and outward Peace, Proſperity, and other

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temporal good things, nor is it expedient for us to know when they are fit for us. *Fifthly*, and laſtly, each time we pray, we ſhould not only conſider our *general State* as Men and *Chriſtians*, and ask what is agreeable thereto: But alſo our *particular Station*, the Condition of our Body and Soul, the tentations we are in or lyable to; and in a word, all the Circumſtances of our Affairs both *Spiritual and Temporal*, and lay them open before GOD, and frame Deſires ſutable to each of theſe things: as a Man goeth to his Friend with a thing which befalls him, and as the Sick and Infirm make the Phyſitian acquainted with all their Diſtempers, ſo we ſhould never fail to impart our State and all our Concerns to GOD, and to ask the Direction and Aſſiſtance he knows we ſtand in need of: Which being done in Faith of his Power and Good-will, as was ſaid before, cannot but be a great Eaſe and Satisfaction to our Minds, becauſe then we may have this *confidence*, *that we ſhall have the Petitions we deſired of Him*; 1 *John* 5. 15. For as all things are poſſible to GOD, ſo all that is good and fit ſhall be done to them who believe in Him or rely upon Him; *Bleſſed are they who believe, for there ſhall be a performance of theſe things which are told them of the LORD.*

Intercession makes a *fourth part of Prayer*. this *St. Paul* enjoyns, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. and it is insinuated in the Tenor of the *LORD'S Prayer*, for that being prescrib'd to be a Form of *private Prayer*, and yet runing all alongs in the *plural number*; it teacheth us that while we *pray for our selves, we should also be careful to hold up the concerns of others.* Selfishness is contrary to the temper of the *Christian Religion*, and it renders our *Prayers ineffectual*; For GOD hears us and deals with us only according as we are disposed towards others, *with what measure we mett it shall be measured to us.* The *Apostle* requires expresly that our *Prayers* be *without wrath*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. intimating thereby that *where there is wrath, there is no acceptance*; And according to the *Christian Law*, there is *Wrath*, where *Kindness* is not testified; he *hates* who does not *love*; he envies anothers Happiness, who does not heartily wish it: That therefore our *Prayers* may be *effectual* for our selves, we must present Supplications for others; that we may taste the *goodness of GOD*, let us not confine it to our selves, but heartily wish it extended to all the rest of the World. That *GOD* may be glorified in others as well as in us, thus it is our duty to *pray for all Men*, whom we must specify according to their various Conditions and Ne-

Neceſſities, becauſe we cannot name every one in particular; but *St. Paul* bids us *pray, eſpecially for Kings, and thoſe in Civil Authority,* in the forecited place, *and for our Spiritual Guides and Rulers,* in ſeveral of his Epiſtles: both becauſe they have much need to be *prayed for*, and alſo in that the *good of Mankind* much depends upon them. And as Nature teacheth us to particularize thoſe who are *near* or *dear to us*, ſo *Religion* requires us expreſly to mention our Enemies: and if our hearts will not ſuffer us to do this, we need not pray at all, as our *Saviour* plainly intimats; *Matth.* 5. 23. 6. 14.

The *fifth Particular* whereof Prayer ſhould conſiſt, is *Praiſe* or *Thanksgiving*, this muſt be alwayes joyned to our *Prayers* according to the *Apoſtles Precept*, *Col.* 4. 2. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 18. Very Nature teacheth us to be thankful to our *Benefactors*, and to make an acknowledgment of their Favours, ſo that an unthankful perſon has been ever eſteemed among Heathens moſt odious; what Obligations then are on us to give thanks to GOD, who is the *great Benefactor*, and who is even the *Author of all the favours which others confer?* And we are the more oblidged to make this hearty and thankful acknowledgment, becauſe tis all the *requital* he ſeeks, & all

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we can return for what he does to us: for we cannot be profitable to him again, as we may be to our *fellow creatures*, our requeſts & the deſires of our heart are intimat by *thanksgiving*, as much as by *Formal Petitioning*, as appears from *Phil.* 4. 6. and moreover hereby, we in a manner lay obligations on GOD, both to continue the benefite, and alſo to *grant us what elſe we aske:* whereas by our unthankfulneſs, we provock GOD to withdraw his Bleſſing already beſtowed, and to turn away from our Prayers; How unreaſonable is it to deſire or expect a kindneſs from him, to whom we have ſhewed our ſelves unthankfull, for what he hath already done? But becauſe GOD meaſureth our Thankfulneſs not by our Words, but by the *inward ſentiments and affections of our hearts*, therefore we ſhould conſider, *Firſt*, the number of thoſe bleſſings which God beſtows on us, how they are almoſt, nay altogether *infinite*, for who can reckon up all the *Publick* and *Private*, the *Temporal* and *Spiritual Bleſſings* they enjoy, the Good they poſſeſs, and the Evils which they want? for as he gives the one, ſo he withholds the other. As the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaketh, *Many, O LORD my GOD, are thy wonderful Works which thou haſt done, and thy thoughts*

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which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are moe then can be numbred. Psal. 40. 5. 2*ly.* The *greatneſs of them*, what matter of Content and Satisfaction they afford, eſpecially ſuch as are Spiritual, for without them we ſhould be *Eternally miſerable.* 3*ly. How freely they are beſtowed*, for they are all *Acts of pure love in GOD*, being given without either merit on our part, or profite or gain to Himſelf. 4*ly. How undeſervedly they are continued*, we rebel againſt GOD, grieve his Spirit, and give him dayly manifold Provocations and yet he ſtill loads us with his *Benefits*: if any Parent received but the thouſand part of theſe injuries from his only Son, He would certainly abandon him. By theſe conſiderations, we muſt labour to make our ſelves ſenſible of GOD'S Goodneſs towards us, and to eſtimate truly theſe expreſſions thereof we have received, that our affections towards him may be enflam'd, *and that our Souls and all within us may be ſtirred up to bleſs and magnifie his holy Name.*

Theſe are the ſeveral parts of Prayer which if perſons pleaſe they may rank otherwayes, for 'tis not material what particular method be obſerved: but by this veiw we have given, it appears that Prayer is ſomewhat

what more then a bare repetition of Words, that to pray well and effectually, there is more time and greater deliberation requisite then People ordinarly imagine, or what I fear the most bestow. If we would have our Prayers avail or take effect, we mutt ply them seriously, and allot some time for the right performance of them. And here none ought to pretend, *that their business will not suffer this*; for though upon some urgent Occasion or particular *emergency*, Men may be allowed to shift or abridge their Prayers: Yet it is not lawful for any to let the Ordinary or Daily Business of their Callings, so take them up as not take time to retire and pray in that manner we have shewed; for this were to prefer Earth to Heaven, the Body to the Soul, the cares of this Life to those things above; whereas our *Saviour* bids us seek first *the kingdom of GOD, and his righteousness*. The Servant that is most strictly kept, hath time allowed to *eat, drink and sleep*, & the Man of the greatest business if he be Master of himself, will allow himself some leasure to talk with his Friends or Neighbours; and why also should not every one seek out some proper time for *Praying to GOD*. 'Tis true, People may lift up their Hearts to GOD while at work, and indeed

indeed they ought to be ever darting up *Pious Ejaculations*; wherefore we are commanded *to Pray alwayes*, and herein also *Prayer* is like to *Breathing*, that it ought to be continual and joined to all other *Exercises*. But these *short Ejaculations* or *occasionall Prayers*, will not serve in steed of such *Set* and *Solemn Prayer* as we have been speaking of, which GOD necessarily calls for, which all *Holy Men* have taken care to perform, *some seven times*, some *thrice a day*, and which none ought to do seldomer then *twice*, *viz.* Morning and Evening: and those who fear that their *Daylie business* hinder them from *plying Prayer* so seriously as they ought, should set a-Day of the Week, or once a Moneth, for redressing their *Daylie Omissions* in this Matter. And indeed none ought to grudge at the time they imploy in *Prayer*, even upon a *Worldly account*; for though the *hours* we steall from our *Callings* to *Pray* and *Meditate*, may seem to obstruct our interest, and to hinder our Thriving; yet on the contrary, they shall bring *a secret Blessing* on the *other hours* which remain, and make them as much or more for our gain then twice as much time: *All these things*, saith Christ, *shall be added unto you.*

I cannot now adduce all the Motives to

Prayer, for they might be ſufficient for a Volame. I ſhall at preſent content my ſelf to ſay, that as *Prayer is neceſſary, ſo it is the moſt pleaſant and profitable exerciſe*; it Sanctifies for our uſe what we receive here, and ſecures the better things of the Life to come; it ſweettens adverſity, and keeps us from ſurfeiting on Proſperity; it is delightful in times of Peace, and disburdens our Hearts of Grief in times of Trouble; and in a word is the greateſt priviledge we enjoy on Earth. But we muſt remember that we hold it only by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and therefore we muſt ever conclude our Prayers in *His Name* and preſent them *through Him.*

SECT. III.

Of Publick Worſhip.

WHat Obligations are on us to *worſhip GOD in private retirements*, and how we ſhould order theſe *ſecret Addreſſes*, we have laid out in the former *Section*. But we muſt not think that we have *ſufficiently ſerved GOD*, when theſe *Private Devotions* are performed; we muſt alſo *worſhip Him openly*, in the view of all the World, with thoſe who

who hold the ſame Faith and Profeſſion with our ſelves: and without we pay this *publick Service*, our Sincerity in the other does not, yea cannot appear, as we have already inſinuat *Sect.* 1*ſt.* of this Chapter, where we ſhewed *our Obligations to frequent the Church or Houſe of GOD.*

But becauſe the *publick Worſhip of GOD* is ſo much diſregarded now a dayes, and every Perſon is ſo ready to quarrel with what is Eſtabliſhed, and to take upon them to Model it; therefore we have thought fit to treat here of ſomewhat particularly, and to ſhew *Firſt*, the *neceſſity of this Worſhip. Secondly*, the *time to be appointed for the performance thereof.* And *Thirdly* the *Nature* and *Matter* of it. As to the *Firſt*, concerning the *Neceſſity* of *publick Worſhip*, it will not be needfull to inſiſt much in proving it; for though there be many who ſlight the *Publick Worſhip of GOD in their Practice*, yet we hardly think there will be any who will take upon them to Juſtify their practice, by alledging the *non-neceſſity of Worſhipping GOD publickly*: And if any perſon ſhould be ſo hardy as to doe it, he ſhould herein not only ſet himſelf againſt all *Chriſtians* of what ever *Perſwaſion*, but alſo ſhould oppoſe the *Sentiments and Practice of all Mankind.* As the

beleiſe of a *Deity* hath been every where received, ſo all People have ever look'd upon themſelves as oblidged to *Worſhip GOD publickly* according to the knowledge they had of him. The *Jews* to whom GOD revealed himſelf, were both enjoyned ſuch a Worſhip and directed how to do it; and the *Goſpel* only abrogate the *Ceremonial part* of the *Law*, it ſtill retains and confirms ſuch Cuſtoms and Practices as are uſeful and agreeable to the Nature thereof, and this is one of them: therefore the *Apoſtles* and *Private Chriſtians*, continued to aſſemble themſelves publickly as the *Jews* did, only taking care to *adapt their Worſhip to the Chriſtian Law*. Our LORD ſuppoſeth, that *His Church* will have *publick Meetings*, and to encourage them here he makes a ſpecial promiſe; *Mat.* 18. 19. *St. Paul* finds fault with thoſe who for fear of peſecution *foreſooke the Aſſembling themſelves together*. *Heb.* 10. 25. 'Tis not only neceſſary that we *Believe with our Hearts*, but we muſt alſo *confeſs with our Mouth*. *Rom.* 10. 12. *Mat.* 10. 32. 33. And as we are thus oblidg'd to a *publick profeſſion of GOD and Religion*, ſo by the ſame Reaſon to *a publick Worſhip*: for this is the Badge and Evidence of that. And as the *Glory of GOD* requires him to *be worſhipped Publickly*, ſo the Edification

Edification of others, *for hereby* saith the *Apostle*, *we provock one another to love and to Good Works*; *Heb.* 10. 24. *Finally*, our Private Interest, and the Concerns of the *Common Wealth* where we live, oblidge us to meet together, to call upon GOD, that by the Importunity and Strength of our *united Prayers*, we may procure all necessary Blessings. Upon these considerations we are oblidg'd to attend the *publick Worship of GOD*. And nothing can justifie our withdrawing from it, except those we live among require our complyance with some thing sinful and which we know to be offensive to GOD.

Having thus seen the necessity of *publick Worship*, it clearly follows from hence that there must be some *set time appointed for it*. And seeing the Reasons which oblidge to this *Worship* are alwayes in force, therefore that it may seem continued too, there must be no considerable distance betwixt the times appointed for the performance thereof: there is a Cessation of the *Worship*, if the returns of these times be not Frequent; for Men are said to leave off that, which they do seldomer then there is need or occasion of doing it. Upon this account even these who had no more then *Natural Light*, have thought themselves tyed to a *dayly Service* in their Temples;

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the *Pagans* and *Mahumetans* do still Assemble themselves several times a day. GOD enjoyned his *People of Old a Sacrifice Morning and Evening*, *Exod.* 29. 38. At which time also *Publick Prayer* was wont to be made, as appears from *Act.* 3. 1. And though Sacrifice could only be offered in *Jerusalem*, yet the *Jews* who lived elsewhere observ'd *those hours*, came up to their *Synagogues*, and made *Prayers* to GOD jointly, which is the constant Practice of that People to this Day, as *Buxtorf* and some others tell us. Now as *I* hinted before, CHRIST and his *Apostles* did not abolish such Customes and Practices as were *Moral* and tended to the *Glory of GOD*, or *Edification of Men*, but recommended them to be continued among *Christians*: *Sacrifices of Beasts*, 'tis true, are not required nor is there any use of them; but *Sacrifices of Prayer* and *thanksgiving*, these *Calves of our lips* are no less exacted by the *Gospel* then the other by the *Law*. And I cannot see why the *one* should been *continued* under the *Law* and the *other discontinued* under the *Gospel*; the *Apostles* thought there was as much Reason for the one as the other, wherefore they and their *Converts* continued to *serve GOD daylie by such publick Prayers and Worship*, as is evident from *Act.* 2. 42. 46. Which Custome was kept up in the

Church

Church afterwards, and certainly the want hereof is such a defect, as doth more then spoile the Beauty of a *Church*; it is a main cause of the decay of all *true piety*: and therefore the ignorance and stubbornness of the *Generality* of this *Nation* is much to be lamented, which discourage our *Governours* from Establishing this *Dayly Worship of GOD* in *Towns*, *Cities*, and other *populous Places*, which I may confidently call a *Necessary*, as well as a *Reasonable Service*.

But as we ought thus to hallow *every Day*, by devoting some part thereof to the *publick Service* of GOD; so we are oblidg'd to sanctify for this end *one whole Day in seven*, *viz.* the *first day of the Week*, commonly called the *Lord's Day*, partly because of its being peculiarly consecrate to the *Service of GOD*, and partly because of that *special Honour* which the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* conferred on this *Day*, by his *Triumphant resurrection from the Dead*, which was the Reason for its consecration: we should set a part *one day of the seven*, not that this portion appears necessary by *Natural Light*, but because 'twas expresly exacted of the *Jews*, and that we are unjust if our expressions of *Piety* and *Devotion* towards GOD be lesse then what was sought of them; and what oblidgeth us to the observation

ſervation of the *firſt day particularly*, is the practice of the Holy *Apoſtles*, who either had an expreſſe command for what they did themſeves and enjoyned others in the *Worſhip of GOD*, or were led thereto by the *holy Ghoſt*. Now their practice in this particular is declared to us *Act.* 20. 7. 1. *Cor.* 16. 2. And is witneſſed by a conſtant *univerſal Tradition* of *the Church*.

Beſides the *LORD'S Day*, no other is ſtrictly neceſſary to be kept, except in obedience to our *Rulers Civil and Eccleſiaſtical*; who without all queſtion may (as well as the *Jewiſh Church* and State formerly) appoint dayes for the *publick Worſhip* and *ſervice of GOD*, upon the account either of ſome particular emergency wherein *Church or State* is concerned, or of ſome ſpecial Mercy granted them. But they ought to be careful neither to burden People with too many ſuch appointments, nor yet to give them a diſguſt by ordering *Solemn Dayes* upon mean & ſilly accounts: if Men be not ſerious in theſe *ſolemn Addreſſes*, they are a meer Mockery and Diſhonour to GOD; and it is impoſſible to make them Serious when the cauſe and occaſion of them is frivolous and unworthy to be made the matter of *Divine Worſhip*. And ſo the *Church of Rome* has miſera-

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bly tranſgreſſed, for *firſt*, ſhe hath ſo multiplied her *Faſts and Feſtivals*, that the number of them almoſt exceeds the dayes of the Year; the year would need to be enlarg'd, if all their *Holy Dayes* ſhould be diſtinctly and exactly keept. And though it be pretended that all are not required to obſerve each of them; yet there be too many impoſed upon every perſon and every place, ſo that the *French King* was neceſſitate to deall with the *Pope* lately for the diſpenſing with a great many in his Kingdom. Again the *Church of Rome* is not only to blame for enjoyning ſuch an intollerable burden of dayes, but alſo becauſe the Reaſon of theſe injunctions, for the moſt part, are frivolous ſcarce worthy of a Man's ſerious attention, much leſſe of being the matter and occaſion of *ſolemn Devotions*, as for example the invention of ſome pitiful Relicts, the dedication of Bells, ſome ridiculous paſſage of their *Legendary Saints*, *&c.* and as moſt of their *Holy-dayes* are in honour of their *Saints*, ſo the moſt of their *Saints* according to their own relation did nothing memorable, their lives are more Fooliſh and impertinent then Old Wives Fables, or the Tales of Children, as we might ſhew by ſeveral inſtances did we not fear to be tedious.

But leaving this, we come next to ſpeak

to the *Nature of this Worſhip*, which ſhould be payed unto GOD publickly, and to ſhew the Particulars whereof it ſhould conſiſt, which ought eſpecially to be conſidered.

And *Firſt*, as to the *General nature of this Worſhip*, it muſt *firſt* anſwer the end thereof, which is the *Glory of GOD*, *the Celebration and Praiſe of his Greatneſs*, *Wiſdom*, *Goodneſs* and other *Glorious perfections*; that the *Souls of the Worſhippers* may be enflamed with the love of GOD. and that they may be excited to Fear, Truſt, and Obey Him.

2*ly*. It muſt be agreeable to the Will and Mind of GOD, and altogether free of what he hath forbidden, or ſignified his diſpleaſure with: otherwayes it will be ſo far from being acceptable, that it will be very abominable.

3*ly*. It muſt not only contain all the parts of *Natural Religion*, but beſides carry *Characters of the Goſpel*, for it is not only Reaſonable, but Neceſſary that the *Worſhip of GOD* be Regulate by *ſpecial diſpenſations of his Grace*, and made to expreſſe the particulars of ſuch *Diſpenſations*. the *Jews* were required to *Worſhip God in a different Manner* from what is diſcernable by *Natural Light*; and ſo thoſe who believe the *Truth* and *Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion*, muſt have a *Peculiar Worſhip*, that is diſtinct from ſuch as own no *Revelation*, or only *that of the old Teſtament*. 4*ly*.

Fourthly, from theſe conſiderations it follows, that *Chriſtians* muſt *Worſhip GOD together*, *in ſpirit and Truth*: For ſo our *Saviour directed us*, *John* 4. 23. Where he ſaith, *The hour cometh*, *and now is*, *when the true Worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in Spirit and Truth*: *For the Father ſeeketh ſuch to Worſhip him*, *GOD is a Spirit*, *and they that Worſhip*, *muſt Worſhip him in Spirit and Truth.* Which words, whither we conſider them abſtractly & in a general notion, as delivering a certain *Natural Truth*, or with a reference to the way of *Worſhipping GOD* then uſual in the World. I ſay, which way ſo ever we conſider them, they teach us that GOD will now be *Worſhipped*, not by a *Multitude of carnal and external Obſervances*, or a number of *Myſterious* and almoſt *unintelligible rites and Ceremonies*, as the *Gentiles* uſed to doe, and as he thought fit for a time to impoſe upon the *Jews:* But by actions of a *Spiritual Nature*, and whole ſignification and uſe is *Reaſonable* and eaſily underſtood. The *Law* conſidered Men as in a weak Infant *State*, and ſo preſcribed a Worſhip ſutable to ſuch a *State*; but the *Goſpel* endeavours to bring us to the full *Stature of perfect Men*, and conſiders us as ſuch, and therefore our way of worſhipping GOD now

muſt ſpeak out more perfect Reaſon and underſtanding. The worſhip required of *Chriſtians* is not a *Pompous ſhew of Ceremonies*, which may affect Children or Childiſh Perſons; but *Real and Subſtantial expreſſions of Faith, Love, Fear, Joy*, and *Confidence in GOD:* There muſt not be more, or other Ceremonies uſed in the *Worſhip of GOD*, then what is requiſite for Order and Decency, or neceſſary to Excite and Fix the *inward attention of our minds*; for that is not True or *proper Worſhip* which is wholly *External*, and doth not come from, and is not performed by the *inward Mind.* Thus in a word as we ſhould *Worſhip GOD in Spirit and Truth*, *So to Worſhip in Spirit*, is to *Worſhip with the inward acts* and *Affections of* the *Soul*, and to *Worſhip in Truth* is to perform ſuch *Outward Acts* as doth not Myſtically and Figuratively but plainly and properly, ſignify and hold forth theſe *inward ones.*

Having thus viewed the *Nature* of *Publick Worſhip* in *General*, we paſſe to the conſideration of the *parts* thereof *In particular.*

And *Firſt* the *Publick Worſhip of God* ſhould conſiſt of *Prayers*, this is ſo clear from *Scripture, Reaſon*, & the practice of all the world, that it were a vain thing to prove it: the parts and Qualifications of *Publick Prayer*, are the

the ſame with thoſe of private *Prayer*, where-of we have ſpoken already. And becauſe it is ſo uſeful to know before hand what we ſhould Pray, and ſo unworthy a thing to utter raſh and indiſcreet expreſſions before GOD, eſpecially in publick, therefore the *Church* in Ages have ever thought themſelves oblidged to compoſe deliberatly *Forms of publick Prayer*, and not to leave them to the extemporary effuſions of him who officiates; there is not at this day any *Church* (except our own) *without a publick Service and Liturgy:* But becauſe we are driven to the neceſſity at preſent, not to uſe one, therefore it is incumbent on the *publick Miniſters* to take the more care in compoſing their *Prayers*, that their expreſſions be grave & Decent, & that as to the *Matter* of them they contain all things proper & neceſſary, & nothing diſagreable to *God*, or which may diſguſt & ſtumble the *Worſhippers.* they ſhould ſtudy to make their *Prayers* to expreſs truly the general needs & deſires of the People; for he who *Prayeth* is their mouth, imployed to ſpeake in their name, what every one ſhould do if they were allowed to ſpeak: & ſo all *publick Prayers* ſhould be ſo ordered, that every one may be able to joine heartily with them. And here I cannot paſſe two faults ordinarly committed in this part of

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publick Worſhip, the one for the moſt part in Country Pariſhes, the other generally both in City and Country: by this laſt I mean a careleſs unconcernedneſs in Prayer, many think not themſelves oblidged to joyne with the *Miniſter* while he prayes, they do not conſider that he is but their voice, & that 'tis neceſſary for them to ſay with the heart what he does with the mouth, elſe the *Prayers* cannot be heard as theirs, or for them. Though one Pray but audibly to ſhun confuſion, yet it is neceſſary for all to aſſent thereto. The other Fault is committed often by the *Common People* (eſpecially in the *Northren parts* of the Kingdom, as the former in the *Southren parts*) who fall to their particular *Prayers* when the *Miniſter* is praying in the *name of the whole Congregation*: this is an irregular and undecent thing which obſtructs the Edification Deſigned by this part of Worſhip, ſee 1. *Cor.* 14. 26. When the congregation cometh together, it ſhould be with *one Heart and Mind*, they ought not to have different exerciſes but alwayes the ſame; they ſhould pray one and the ſame Prayer *with one accord*, as we read the *Diſciples* did *Act.* 4. 24. To prevent both theſe Evils, it 'twas uſuall in all, both *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian Liturgies* to Appoint the People to utter ſometimes ſome ſhort ſentences,

es, and alwayes to ſpeak out audibly, *Amen*, at the concluſion of every Prayer, as is intimate to us, 1. *Cor.* 14. 16.

Another Act of *Divine Worſhip* eſpecially in *Publick Aſſemblies*, *is ſinging of Pſalms and Spiritual Songs.* This was alwayes a part of the *Worſhip of GOD* under the *Old Teſtament*, 'twas obſerved by our *Saviour* with his *Diſciples*, *Matth.* 26. 30. And *St. Paul* enjoyns it to all *Chriſtians*, *Eph.* 5. 19. *Col.* 3. 16. Singing *Hymns* and *Pſalms* is of great uſe in the *Service of GOD*, both to prepare our Minds for it, and to make us take Pleaſure in it. It fixeth our thoughts, elevats our Spirits, fills us with Joy in GOD, and leaveth on our Minds a deeper impreſſion *of Divine Truths*, then almoſt any other part of *Religious Worſhip:* for which cauſe it hath been an *univerſal practice* in the *Church* through all Ages of the World.

And as *Singing* is our Duty, ſo the *Pſalms of David* are excellently fitted for ths purpoſe, they furniſh us both with proper Matter and appoſite Expreſſions: They were dictate by the *Spirit of GOD* to be imployed particularly in this *Divine exerciſe*; and we muſt not think the uſe of them to have ceaſed with the *Law* or *Jewiſh ſtate*; no certainly they are ſtill uſefull to the *Church* and

and proper for the times of the *Goſpel*. Without doubt S. *Paul* in the forecited places, and *S. Jaines* Ch: 5. 13. Are to be underſtood of the *Pſalms of David*, becauſe the tittle of *Pſalms* has been alwayes appropriate to them. And from this *Injunction* of the *Apoſtles* conformable to their Practice, and which is moſt Reaſonable and uſefull, the *Church* hath ever uſed theſe *Pſalms* in her *Publick Service*.

I know there are ſome who not only ſcruple at ſome of the *Pſalms*, but ſay expreſly *they ought not to be ſung and when it is done they refuſe to take a part*. But truly I think there is no Reaſon for this. Indeed all of them are not proper for all occaſions, ſome are more pertinent and ſutable at one time then another, and therefore they who have the ordering of the *Pubick Service*, ſhould make a Prudent choice of *Pſalms* ſuted to the occaſion, however all of them may be ſung, and becauſe People have not their own choiſe, but muſt take them as they are preſcrib'd; I will here propoſe ſome Conſiderations to ſhew how we may freely joyne with any *Pſalm* and both ſing it with underſtanding and alſo with edification.

Firſt there can be no Queſtion of thoſe *Pſalms*, which Declare the *Divine Attributes*, Display

Diſplay the *Works of GOD*, hold forth the *excellency of his word*, or the *General State* of Man. To Sing and Meditate on theſe cannot be improper at any time, but alwayes uſefull and ſeaſonable.

2*ly.* As for thoſe *Pſalms* which were Writ upon particular Occaſions, beſides the Literal ſence which relates to thoſe Perſons, their actions and circumſtances upon which account they were penned; there is a *Myſtical ſenſe* belongs to them which referres them to *Chriſt* and his *Church*; and moreover, they are capable of being accommodated to ſeveral Conditions and Circumſtances both of *Private Perſons* and *Publick Societies* by allowing ſome Liberty to *Figures*, *Allegories* and other *Poetical Strains* which are uſual in *Songs* and *Hymns:* Now though we ſhould be little concerned in the *Literal ſenſe*, yet we are in the *Myſtical*, and if they will ſuffer an accommodation to our ſelves or the *Church and State* we live in, then we not only may uſe them, but the uſe of them will be both pleaſant and edifying.

3*ly.* Theſe *Pſalms* which contain narrations of the *Wonders which GOD wrought for the People of Iſrael*, or the *Special mercies conferred upon them*, or *David* in particular, they are very proper to be ſung; for beſides that we

ought to celebrate the *Praiſes of GOD* for his goodneſs to others as well as our ſelves, and that all the world are concerned in *theſe favours heaped on the Jewiſh Nation*, becauſe they ſerved to *Uſher in the Goſpel* and contributed to the *Manifeſtation of the Son of GOD*. I ſay, beſides theſe two Conſiderations, thoſe Acts of GOD towards his People in former times, are inſtances of his Power and Goodneſs, and ſo proper matter for his Praiſe; they are alſo grounds of our hope, and Motives to truſt & confidence in Him both for our ſelves and the Publick; ſee *Rom.* 15. 4.

4*ly*. GOD'S plagues upon the *Heathen* and his puniſhments upon *His own People*, are inſtances of *GOD'S Juſtice* and *Holineſs*, and therefore the *Pſalms* which narrate theſe may be ſung to put us in mind, *that he is not GOD who hath pleaſure in wickedneſs, and that no relation to him will excuſe ſin, or hold off judgments, if his Laws be broken.* And ſo they are uſeful to ſtirr up our repentance leſt we likewiſe ſmart, and our thankfulneſs for whatforbearance and gentle dealing we have met with.

5*ly*. The *Pſalms* where *David* layeth out his own Troubles, and the ſucceſſe of his Enemies are be meditate on, as Proofs that the Juſt will be afflicted and the wicked pro-

ſper

ſperous, to teach us Patience and Contentment. The high Aſſertions of his Integrity and Uprightneſs, and Love to the *Law of GOD*, *&c.* We ſhould ſing, thereby to teſtify, that it is our Duty to endeavour this way to pleaſe GOD, and that without theſe Endeavours we ought not to lay hold on the Promiſes, nor preſume to crave the Priviledges of His Children.

6. The *Pſalms* of *imprecations* are moſt ſcrupled at, but it is becauſe perſons are not at the pains to take a right view of them: for whatever was the particular Occaſion of them, or whom ever they were primarily deſigned againſt, we ſhould conſider them now as intimations of the *Divine vengeance towards obſtinate and incorrigible ſinners, and as declarations of the irrevocable Sentence which his juſtice hath paſſed againſt them.* Nay, I may ſay this is the ſpecial intent of them, for if they had been only to vent *David's* private wrath, and emnity, GOD would not inſpired them, nor approved of them. And it is no leſs lawful & proper ſometimes to ſing them, then to meditate on the heavy judgements & ſeverity of *God* towards impenitent ſinners; that thereby a wholeſome *fear of God* may be excited in us. By them alſo we may be ſupported againſt thoſe tentations which ariſe from ſuc-

ceſs of the Enemies of God, & their inſolency in oppoſing the Truth and oppreſſing his People: And as it was never thought unlawful in times of Warr, and publick Trouble and Diſorders to pray againſt the unjuſt authour and inſtruments thereof, not that GOD would damne their Souls, but that he would defeat their Devices, give them ſhame and confuſion, and by his Judgements on their Perſons, put them in fear to carry on their wicked enterpriſes; and all this not to ſatisfy our revengful Paſſions, but that it may be known *there is a GOD who ruleth the world, and who will defend the innocent and righteous to the end all people may be engaged to put their truſt in him.* So I doe not ſee why it ſhould be thought improper on ſuch occaſions to ſing theſe *Pſalms*, and to *waite patiently for the accompliſhment of them.* They are very unreaſonable and unjuſt who would wreſt this to the countenancing of *private revenge*, and the *curſing of Enemies*, whither *publick* or *Private*, for its not lawful for us to doe, what GOD doth as he is *Supreme judge*, and by vertue of his *ſoveraign authority*, *vengeance is mine ſaith the Lord*, it belongs to him to puniſh, but not to us; and as it is not lawful for us to take Vengeance, becauſe GOD doth it; ſo neither

ther is it unlawful to meditate on the juſt judgements of GOD, to ſing of them, and to give our aſſent to them, becauſe we are forbidden to curſe or revenge our ſelves.

7ly It is alledged againſt ſome *Pſalms*, that we cannot turn them to Prayers, or if we ſhould they would not be true as from us, and therefore it is not fit to ſing them: But to this may be anſwered, that *there is a difference between praying and ſinging*; every Prayer may be made a Hymn or Song of Praiſe, but that may be fit to be Sung which cannot properly be Prayed. In Prayer we turn our Minds wholly to GOD himſelf, ſpeake to him, and therefore it is neceſſary that our Words be ſtrictly true and ſutable to our *Particular State:* But in Singing we ſpeak not ſo directly to GOD, as of him to others. Singing is a mutual calling upon one another to *Laud and Praiſe GOD*, together with a propoſal of what makes for his Glory; and therefore it is proper enough to ſing any thing which makes for the Glory of GOD, though it do not quadrate with our own caſe in all Circumſtances.

But as we have made it thus appear that all the *Pſalms of David* may be ſung properly and with Edification, ſo we do not ſay that

hat none other may be ſung, it is certainly lawful to have other Hymns beſides, and moſt Reaſonable to have ſome more appropriate to the *Goſpel* and the *Myſteries* revealed therein, that our Worſhip in this as well as in other things may be diſtinguiſhed from that of *Jews*. *Pliny* in his Letter to *Trajan*, *tells that the Chriſtians were wont to ſing a hymn to CHRIST as to GOD*, which muſt have been ſome other then *the Pſalms of David*, wherein there was ſome more expreſs mention of *CHRIST*, or which had ſome more peculiar reference to him, then what is to be found in theſe *Pſalms*. It is impoſſible to give any Reaſon why the *Hymns* of the *N. T.* ſhould no be uſed as well as thoſe of the *Old*, ſeing the ſame *Spirit dictate both*, and that there is ſome ſpecial propriety in them to the *Chriſtian Faith*. And as for the *Doxology*, the queſtioning its lawfulneſs, bewrayes ſuch *Ignorance* or humour, that I think it needleſs to prove the uſe of it: if People would lay aſide their prejudices, they might eaſily diſcern it very fit and proper to joyne this to each *Pſalm*, for thereby we give the *Pſalm* an *Evangelical ſenſe* & make it referre to every *Perſon* in the *Holy Trinity*, who as they are undivided in their *eſſence*, ſo they ſhould be united in our *Worſhip* and as they are diſtinctly

revealed

revealed to us, ſo we ought in all our Devotions to pay them *diſtinct and particular Worſhip.*

3*dly*- The *reading of the Holy Scriptures* is a neceſſary part of *Gods publick Worſhip.* This was uſed in the *Jewiſh Aſſemblies* as appears from *Neh.* 8. 8. *Luke* 4. 16. *Acts* 13. 15. 15. 21. St. *Paul* expreſly chargeth *The reading of his Epiſtles*, *Col.* 4. 16. 1 *Theſſ.* 5: 27. And for the ſame Reaſon the reſt of the *Scripture* ought to be read, and the *Church* has been ſtill in uſe to do ſo. Now the main Reaſon hereof, is not our own inſtruction, but to do honour to GOD, for as hereby we own the Scriptures to be from GOD, ſo we ſolemnly acknowlege our ſelves bound to *hear and obey his word*, and tye our ſelves to walk as it dierects us. The *publick Worſhip of GOD* is not rightly performed, when there is no *reading of Scriptures*; and it is all one almoſt as if they were caſt out of the *Worſhip*, when they are only read while the People are coming to *Church*, but not after they are mett: For then the reading is only uſed for a divertiſement to put off the time, and not as a Honour or Acknowledgement due to GOD. They underſtand little of the Nature or *end of publick Worſhip*, who would have the *reading of Scripture* laid aſide, becauſe it can be done at home, Such have more

more regard to their Fancy, then to the *true honour of GOD*; and do come to *Church* rather to feed an impertinent Curiosity, and desire of Novelty, then to perform a reasonable Service to GOD. Not to speak of the inability of a great many to perform this exercise in Private, the reading at home makes not so much for the Honour of the Scriptures, and consequently of GOD who is the Author of them. Respect to the Majesty and Authority of GOD require that his Will and Pleasure be Promulgate with solemnity, and heard with reverence. We have an eminent *Instance* hereof, *Neh.* 8. 5, 6.

4*thly*, To the *reading of the Scripture* was alwayes wont to be joyned Preaching on the *Sabbath* and other *Festival-dayes*, as appears from the forecited places, which custome the Church hath continued, and it is most necessary and profitable, It shews our deference to GOD, and a regard for his Authority, when we are willing to hear such as he hath Commissioned to inform us of his Will anent us. *He that heareth you*, said Christ to the Apostles, *heareth me, and he that dispiseth you, despiseth me, and him that sent me.* Kings and Princes are Honoured or Affronted according as their Servants and

message

meſſage are received: now *the Miniſters are Ambaſſadours in CHRISTS ſtead, by whom GOD beſeecheth People to be reconciled unto himſelf.* 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. *Reconciliation* with *God* is the Errand on which *Miniſters* are ſent, and ſeing the terms of this Reconciliation, and the means by which it is wrought, are ſet down in *Scripture*, therefore the ſubject matter of preaching ſhould be to give the ſenſe and meaning of the *Scripture*, and to exhort to a Complyance with what is there contained. Sermons are not ordained to teach men curious things, or to tickle them with fine neat ſpeeches; but to make them underſtand the Scriptures, to inſtruct them in the *Doctrine* thereof, and to ſtirr them up to obſerve the ſame, thus *Ezra* preached, *Neh.* 8. 8. And ordinarly in the primitive Church, their Sermons were only Explications of ſuch Portions of *Scripture* as were read in the *publick Service*, together with an Exhortation to obey it. The principal deſign of Preaching is to unfold the meaning of *God's Word*, and to help men to diſcern the mind of the Lord revealed therein; and as theſe are the beſt and moſt Edifying Sermons which diſcover this plainly and clearly, ſo it is the duty of all to hearken diligently to theſe inſtructions, and to re-

ceive them gladly. It ſpeaks out a Love to GOD when we are willing and very deſirous to know his will: but there is little regard for God, where there is no deſire to underſtand what he ſayeth to us in and by his *word*. But though *the Prieſts lips ſhould keep knowledge*, and that it is the peoples duty *to ſeek the Law at his Mouth*, yet this is not to render the private ſearch and ſtudy of the *Scriptures* uſeleſs: Guides are ordained to be helps, but not to take away our own ſight; we may find them uſeful though we do not put out our eyes. As the *Noble Bereans* did, we ſhould *ſearch the Scriptures dayly whither theſe things we hear be true or not*; And this is the more neceſſary, becauſe we are forewarned of *falſe Prophets*: Every Spirit is not to be believed, none ought to be received with an *implicit Faith*, but only the Spirit of GOD: all other ſhould be tryed before truſted. And it needs be no hard task to try the truth of Doctrines, if we lay aſide prejudice, and ſearch the *Scripture impartially*: A man by applying his eye narrowly, eſpecially if he hath the advantage of a Rule, will ſoon diſcern whither a thing be ſtraight or crooked; and it is indeed no leſs eaſie to judge in matters neceſſarie to Salvation.

5*thly*,

5*thly*, I cannot omit here what was Anciently & Univerſally uſed though now turned into deſuetude among us; and it is the *Solemn and explicite profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith*, by a rehearſal of ſome *Summary* thereof, as the *Apoſtles* or *Nicene*, or *Athanaſian Creed*. The expreſſe declaration of our Faith is much both for our profite and the honour of GOD: It is for the honour of GOD that we believe in GOD, and in JESUS CHRIST, and give our aſſent to all the truths of the Goſpel; *without this faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe GOD*, unleſs our worſhip be founded on the belief of theſe things, it is altogether unacceptable: And it is not only neceſſary to have this Faith alwayes in our hearts, but we muſt alſo ſometimes openly teſtify it, by confeſſing the ſame with our mouths, as the Apoſtle tells us, Rom: 10. 9. Where he ſaith, *that if thou ſhalt confeſſe with thy mouth the LORD JESUS, and ſhalt believe in thine heart that GOD hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved; For with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto Salvation.* This is alſo profitable for our ſelves, for theſe *Creeds* are the *Badges* of *Chriſtianity*, which inſtruct us in our profeſſion, and teach us how to *anſwer every man who*

asketh a reason of the hope that is in us. A frequent repetition of the Creed fixeth the great Articles of our Religion in our mind, brings them often to our remembrance, and serves to excite us to walk worthy of the Gospel. Persons of Honour are careful to behave suitably while they have the *signs* and *badges* of their Dignity and Quality upon them; and sure it could not but oblidge and quicken us to study a Christian Behaviour, if we frequently made a serious and solemn profession of our Faith. Lastly, *the celebration of the LORDS Supper* should frequently accompany our other acts of publick worship; the *Apostles* with their *Converts* did this dayly, as we read Acts 2. 42. 46. which practice continued long in the *Primitive Church*. *St. Augustine* in one of his *Epistles* to *Januarius* says 'twas the custome to do so in many places

* *vid: Gessel: Hist: Eccl: p:* 426.

*The *Council* of *Antioch* condemnes such as do not communicate when they come up to Church to hear, so doe those *Canons* which carry the name of *Apostolical*. Thus it appears that the participation of the Lord's Supper, was look'd upon as a necessary part of Divine service, which could not be well omitted; and there can be no reason given, why the use

of

of this *S*acrament (at leaſt every LORD*s* Day) was left off, but the decay of *P*iety: The *Z*eal and Devotion of the *Apoſtolick Ages* wore out, and ſo men became careleſs of giving this expreſſion thereof. Or out off a *S*uperſtitious regard to their chief Feſtivals, they would only communicate on theſe days, that they might ſeem to do them the greater honour. But as for the preſent cuſtome of communicating only once or twice a year, it is ſo unaccountable and ſpeaks out ſo little *true love to* GOD, and the *memory of our Saviour*, that *Calvin* had good reaſon to call it *Diabolicum inventum*, a meer device of *S*atans to ſtiffle Piety, and to keep back Peoples endeavours after Godlineſs.

This is a piece of Worſhip peculiar to the Chriſtian Religion, which our LORD hath expreſſly enjoined; It's a great teſtimony of our *Faith*, a ſolemn act of *Adoration* payed both to the Father and Son, and a viſible commemoration of the *Myſtery* of the *Croſs*, which as *S. Paul* ſpeaketh, is both *the Wiſdom of GOD, and the Power of GOD:* In a word, the *S*acrament of the Lord's-Supper, is the *Chief Rite* of our *R*eligion, which *in a manner* comprehends all others parts thereof, and by the ſerious participation of this Sacrament we truely glorify GOD, and bring

good

good to our ſelves, for CHRIST hath ordained it to be *the inſtrument of our union with him*, and the *conveyance of the benefits of his death.* And therefore this Sacrament ſhould be often adminiſtrate, and who would teſtifie their love to *GOD*, ſhould as frequently partake thereof.

It is alledged againſt frequent communicating, *firſt*, that 'twould take away much of the eſteem due to this *Sacrament.* But if this Reaſon were good, 'twould follow alſo that we ſhould ſeldome *think on GOD*, *Pray*, *read the Scriptures*, and *perform other Acts of Religion.* It is no true eſteem, which ariſeth only from the conſideration of the rarity of the thing; and certainly acquaintance with *Spiritual actions* & frequent exerciſing them, begets the higheſt eſteem of them and delight in them: He Prays beſt and with moſt pleaſure who *Prays oftneſt*, and ſo of other things. Another pretence is that if men *Communicate frequently*, they would not have leaſure to prepare themſelves: But this runs upon a miſtake of the nature of the *Sacrament*, and of the preparation requiſit thereto. A *Ceſſation* from ſin is alwayes neceſſary, but not from our civil buſineſs, eſpecially if we had any occaſion of *Communicating.* He who firmly believes the

Goſpel

Goſpel, heartily repents *of his ſins*, and is reſolved to live according to the *Goſpel*, is truely diſpoſed for the *Sacrament* any day, and every day; and who is not thus diſpoſed for the *Sacrament*, neither is he *fit to pray*, or to go about any other *Religious exerciſe*, and ſo is in a ſtate of enmity with GOD. If a Perſon once underſtand the *Nature and Deſign of the Sacrament*, and daylie exerciſe himſelf in Prayer, as we have ſhewed in the former *Section*, if his Life be a *continual walking with GOD*, he is ever ſutablely prepar'd for it. And if we ought to be alwayes thus prepar'd, therefore the want of *preparation* will not excuſe the *Ommiſſion of this Duty*, the *Omiſſion* whereof doth of it ſelf imply (though People are loath to acknowledge it) a *renunciation of the Chriſtian Religion.*

Thus we have gone through the ſeveral parts *of publick Worſhip*, ſhewed the neceſſity of them, and let ſee the right manner of going about them. And by what account we have given, which certainly will hold true, it appears that the *publick Worſhip* in all *Reformed Churches* is Proper and Acceptable, ſo that none have any juſt Reaſon to withdraw from it, and who doe it are undoubtedly guilty of *Schiſme*: 'tis true, in ſome Places perhaps (and particularly among our ſelves

ſelves) there would need ſome Rectification for the more Grave, Decent and Orderly *performance of Divine ſervice*; but however neither we nor any other *of our Proteſtant Brethren* want any eſſential part of Worſhip, nor have we or they any thing diſagreeable to GOD, or which deſtroyes the end of Worſhip, ſo that they are without all excuſe who refuſe to have *Communion* with *this* or any *other Reform'd Church.*

But as this muſt be acknowledg'd for all *Reformed Churches*, ſo the quite contrary is true *of the Worſhip in the Church of Rome:* For it neither anſwers the *end*, nor agrees to the *right rules of GOD'S Worſhip*; it is not, it cannot be acceptable to GOD, for it is full of Abominations.

For *Firſt*, in generall the *Popiſh Service* is neither *Spiritual* nor *Reaſonable.* Though we do not conſider it in Retail but in Groſs, it muſt be acknowledg'd an ignorant brutiſh ſervice, a ſervice which is not conform to the *Scriptures*, nor doth it tend to the Glory of GOD, or the Edification of Men, becauſe it cannot be underſtood being *performed in an unknown Tongue.* As the Learned *D. Taylor* ſayeth, *we may as ſoon reconcile Adultery with the ſeventh Command, as the ſervice in a Language which cannot be underſtood*, with the 14. of the

first *Ep.* to the *Corinthians*; and *if publick Worship* need not be understood, neither needs it be pronounced at all; for if the *Priest speaks* not to let Men understand him, he needs not speak to inform *God*, and so a *Dumb Priest* is even as good as one whom the People doth not understand. This practice of the *Church of Rome* is both contrary to the practice of all the *World*, & is condemned by common Sense; so that the *Papists* in defending themselves use a deal of impertinent nonsence and vent intolerable absurdities which render *Religion* ridiculous, and destroy the very Nature and Design of it. What an Absurdity is it, to teach People to use Prayers only as Charms? To think *ignorant prating* as acceptable to GOD, as the *sincere desires of the Soul*? and that judgement and discretion are useless in *Religion*, though it be the great end of our *Creation*, and though for it especially we were endued with Reasonable Faculties? I shall conclude this point.

with what *a late* Popish *Writer* hath confessed, *It is necessary to have the publick service in the common language of the Country; for it is certain that this is agreeable to the Holy Scripture. The Mysteries of GOD are not as those of Pagans; these behoved to be hid from*

Moyens sur la conversion de Heretiques 147.

People, becauſe they were ſhameful and ridiculous, but GOD would have his Children inſtructed fully in his. There cannot be greater reproach thrown upon Religion, then to ſay as ſome do, that Faith without Knowledge is beſt. He muſt be an Impoſtour and Seducer who ſpeaketh ſo, for St. Paul *commands nothing more then that we ſhould encreaſe in knowledge; The reading of the Holy Scripture ſhould be recommended to People according to the practice of all the Fathers, It was not the People who wreſted the Scripture, and ſpread Hereſies; they were the Biſhops and Doctors and Perſons of the Clergy. Arrius, Macedonius, Neſtorius, Eutyches, Pelagius, were all Church men.*

2ly. The *Worſhip of the Roman Church* has not a Reſemblance to the *Chriſtian Religion*, becauſe it wants the *purity and ſimplicity* thereof to make *Worſhip* look like *Chriſtian*, as we formerly ſhewed, it ſhould be Plain and Simple, that is, free of *Ceremonies*, except what are requiſite to Excite aud Fix the attention, & ſhould chiefly conſiſt of Actions, which are Grave and Serious, and which do properly expreſſe the *Divine Majeſty and Glory:* But the *Worſhip of the Papiſts* is meerly Pomp & Pageantry, a vain external Shew of Ceremonies, fitter for the *Theatre* then the *Church.* Their *Churches* are dreſſed with *Gaudy Scenes* like *Play-Houſes*, and like them too

too they uſe not the light of the *Sun*, but the dazling & deceiving light *of Lamps and Wax-Candles*; their *Prieſts* are ſumptuouſly decked with various kinds of Garments, and as for the *Service* it ſelf, it conſiſts in ſprinkling *of holy water*, *kindling Perfumes*, *Kneeling*, *and bowing* and often croſſing, Turning to the Right or Left Hand, according to the Sign given, the Elevating and Lowing of the Voice at certain Times, the vain repetition of unintelligible Words, and in a multitude of impertinent and inſignificant Ceremonies which chock the very Spirit of *Religion*, and which would render what is read or ſpoken to no purpoſe though it could be underſtood: For 'tis impoſſible that the mind can be attentive or make any Serious application, where there is ſuch a multitude of *external performances*. The *Worſhip* enjoyn'd and practiſed in the *Church of Rome* has more reſemblance to *Paganiſme* then the *Chriſtian Religion*; it contains indeed Acts and Inſtances of the *true Worſhip of GOD*, but ſo buried in *Heathniſh Superſtition* that they loſe their *Efficacy*, both with *GOD and Man*. Their *Sprinklings*, *Proceſſions*, *Scourgings*, *Pilgrimages*, and in a word, the moſt of their *Ceremonies* both in their Ordinary and Extraordinary Devotions are derived from *ancient*

Paganiſme, and are indeed more ſuited to *Pagan tempers* then *Chriſtian minds*; for ſuch as underſtand the *Goſpel* know that GOD taketh no pleaſure in ſuch Actions. *The hour cometh*, ſaith Chriſt, *and now is that the true Worſhippers of GOD, ſhall Worſhip Him in Spirit and in Truth, for the Father ſeeketh ſuch to Worſhip Him.*

3ly *Popiſh worſhip* is not only full of *Superſtition* but *Idolatry*, it not only is made up of many fooliſhly and uſeleſſe Actions, which can pretend to no Shadow of Reaſon or *Divine Authority*: But it contains alſo many things expreſly forbidden, as the *Invocation* and *Adoration* of *Angels*, and *Saints*, &c. What *St. Paul* ſaid of *Rome Pagan*, holds true of *Rome Chriſtian*, *they have changed the truth of GOD into a lie, and Worſhip the creature more then the Creator.* For the moſt of their *Worſhip* is not tendred to GOD and JESUS CHRIST, but to *Angels*, the bleſſed *Virgin*, and other departed *Saints*, to *Images*, *Reliques*, that is, the Bones, Aſhes and other forged appurtenances of their ſuppoſed *Saints*, I ſay ſuppoſed, for their is no evidence for the moſt of them but the *Popes Cannonization* which is very unſufficient: 'Tis laid on the name of one *Pope Gregory*, that he ſhould have ſaid, *multorum corpora venerantur*

in

in terris, quorum animæ cruciantur in infernis, that is, *many are Worſhipped as Saints, who are damned in Hell.* The *Papiſts* in their *publick Worſhip* are required to *adore Bread as GOD*, to *Pray to the Dead*, and *for the Dead*, and to do ſeveral other things which not only have no warrant in *Scripture*, but are quite contrary thereto, and therefore GOD can be pleaſed neither with ſuch a worſhip, nor thoſe who offer it, more then he was with *the Nations* whom the *King of Aſſyria* planted in *Samaria*, of whom it is ſaid, *that they feared the LORD, and ſerved other Gods beſides.*

4*ly.* The *Maß* which is the chiefeſt part of their *Worſhip*, is the higheſt abomination: For it is uſed in ſtead of the *Holy Sacrament* which our LORD *inſtituted that night wherein he was betrayed*, but in Trnth, it is is quite another thing, becauſe they have added to it and pared from it, and uſe it in another ſenſe and to other purpoſes, then what that *Sacrament* was deſign'd for. *Firſt*, they withhold the *Cup*, which is the one half of the *Sacrament*, though it be clear that our *Saviour* commanded *All* to *drink of it*, as both the *Councill of Conſtance, and Trent*, acknowledge in their *Acts* which prohibite *the uſe of the Cup to the Laity.* And as for the other part of the *Sacrament*, beſides that their *Wafers* cannot

be

be counted Bread, they do not use the *rite of breaking it*, which is so essential that this *Sacrament* is ordinarly *denominat* by it in *Scripture*. Indeed what the *Priest* takes to himself, he breaks in three pieces, one whereof is cast into the *Cup*, another is left upon the *Altar*, until the end of the *Service*, and the third he puts in his own *Mouth*: but this doth not answer to *that breaking* which our LORD used, and which is necessary to hold Forth the purport of the *Sacrament*. That this Action may be agreeable to our *LORD'S institution*, it is necessary that all the *Communicants* eat and have distribute to them *one broken Bread*. 2*ly*. Our LORD ordain'd the Bread in this *Sacrament* to be only a *symbol of his Body*, but they give it out to be *His very self*, and command *Divine Adoration* to be payed thereto, which is the greatest absurdity and the grossest *Idolatry* imaginable, as we have formerly made out. 3*ly*. Our LORD designed this *Sacrament* to be only a *memorial of his Death*, and of that *satisfaction was given thereby to the Justice of GOD for the sins of men*: but they teach and command under pain of damnation to be believed, that in the *Masse* there is *a real propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead*, because according to them, *Jesus*

Vid.concil. Trid. sess. 22. cap. 1. & 2.

Christ is dayly *Sacrificed* and Offered therein: Which Doctrine contains a heap of Absurdities, and makes their *Maß* a Blasphemous action and most injurious to the *Sacrifice of the Cross*. For hereby it would follow that *Christ* was *Sacrificed* before he was *Crucified*, *viz.* when he instituted this *Sacrament*; that his Death was no sufficient Attonement there being such necessity for repeating it so frequently; and that St. *Paul* erred grossely in thinking it absurd that *he should offer himself often*, in saying, *he was but once offered to bear the sins of many*; and in preferring that *one Oblation of JESUS CHRIST* upon the *Cross* to all the *legal Sacrifices*, because they behoved *to be offered year by year continually* to shew their insufficiency; whereas *he by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, see *Heb.* 9. 25. 28. 10. 1. *&c.* farther from the *Papists Doctrine* of the *Sacrifice of the Maß*, it follows that our *LORD'S Priest hood* is not Eternal, or peculiar to himself as the *Scripture* teacheth, particularly *Heb.* 7. Seing many succeed him in the Office. Nay it may be inferred by good consequence, that Men are preferrable to *JESUS CHRIST* Himself, for the *Priest* is alwayes preferrable to the *Sacrifice*; and therefore if their *Priests* are impowred to offer up

Jesus

Jesus Christ they must be esteem'd better *then he*. None was worthy to *offer that sacrifice which taketh away sin*, but such *an high Priest as was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher then the Heavens*, *Heb:* 7. 26. Wherefore as none could be the *sacrifice* but *JESUS*, so none other could be the *Priest* to offer that *Sacrifice*, both the *Sacrifice* and *Priest* are one, which makes the *Opinions* of the *Papists* concerning a *sacrifice* of the *Mass* impious and blasphemous. It would require a particular Treatise, to set forth the corruptions of the *Church of Rome* in this part of their Worship, *as the Priest partaking alone, the offering it for such are dead, the celebrating it in honour of Saints*, &c. And therefore if there were no more but this alone, twere too much to make People leave the *communion* of that *Church*. But,

Lastly, besides these *Impieties* mentioned, whereof every one is actually guilty who joine in the *Worship of the Church of Rome*, there be a great many other errours, abuses, and corruptions taught and practised in that Church, which all they who keep her *Communion* must necessarly be reckoned guilty of: For as joyning in Worship is a sign of holding Communion, so thereby persons testify their belief of, and assent to all which that

that Church with whom they hold Communion teacheth and practiſeth as neceſſary to *Salvation.* Now ſeeing the *Church of Rome* requireth all under pain of damnation to believe *the infallibility of their Church, the Supremacy of the Pope, Purgatory, Auricular Confeſſion, Pennances, Indulgences, the Inſufficiency of Scripture, the equal Authority of Unwritten Traditions, the unlawfulneſſe of Clergy Mens Marrying, the neceſſity of obſerving Dayes, Meats, &c. Without particular diſpenſations from the Pope, who arrogates to himſelf a power of reſcinding both Humane and Divine Laws,* theſe and many more Falſeſhoods and Abſurdities are enjoyned by the *Roman Church* as *Articles of Faith,* and as *neceſſary to Salvation,* and therefore who keep communion with her, do *ipſo facto* approve of all her Errours and Abominations, and muſt be thought to exclude from *Salvation* thoſe who refuſe to ſubmit thereto, for ſhe doth ſo. It will not availe any to ſay, that in their *Private judgement* they are otherwiſe perſwaded, neither hav[illegible]e any expreſſe Verbal Acknowledge[illegible]to the contrary, ſeeing they do that which neceſſarly import the ſame. Men give their aſſent by their Actions as well as by their Words; and what we cannot approve in our Hearts, we ought not to approve by

our Profeſſion or Practice. Hypocriſy in *Religion* is damnable, and they are Hypocrits who profeſſe what they do not beleive: The belief of the Heart and confeſſion with the mouth ſhould not be diſjoined, neither ought we by our Actions to countenance what we judge falſe and abominable. This I thought fit to ſay, becauſe it is a trick uſed to gain perſons to the *Roman Communion*, if otherwiſe they cannot be induced, to paſs them a formal abjuration of the *Proteſtant Doctrine*, or an expreſſe conſent to all the Tenets of that *Church:* But ſuch would do well to remember and conſider, that they do the one and the other, really and upon the matter as much as if they gave more expreſſe Declarations. *I* ſhall conclude with theſe words of *Scripture* which certainly are as applicable to the *Church of Rome*, as ever they were or will be to any. *Come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye ſhall be my Sons and Daughters, ſaith the LORD Almighty*; 2 *Cor:* 6. 17, 18. And again, *Come out of her my People, that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues: For her ſins have reached unto Heaven, and GOD hath remembred her Iniquities*; *Rev:* 18. 4. 5.

CHAP

CHAP. IV.

Of the last Words of JACOB'S *Vow, The Question about the* Churches Right *to Tithes waved, but the taking them away is shewed to be* Sacriledge. *Every Particular Person oweth to* GOD *a part of his Estate; The* Proportion *considered, and some Motives pressing Charity, and Alm's-Giving, are proposed.*

THat GOD is to be *Worshipped and Adored*, that there should be *Endeavours to please Him*, will be readily acknowledged by All: This is the very *Dictate of Natural Conscience*, and who have no *Sense* thereof, nor own any Obligation thereto, must needs be very Profligate and Debauched. And though it cannot be denyed, but that there are such Monsters of Wickedness who have no *Fear of GOD before their eyes*, yet it must be confessed also, that the *Generality of Mankind* as they *profess and believe in GOD*, so they seem to wish and be desirous *of His Favour and Good-wil.* It is not then gross *Atheism* and *Infidelity* which damnes and undoes the greatest part of the World: but the *Rock upon which Men split most is Hypocrisie*,

and the want of *sincerity in serving GOD.* They would please him, and are content to do something in order to it, but yet have not a Heart to ply all that is requisite: thus they will observe the *smaller* and *lesser* part of the *Law*, but in the mean time slip over what is more Weighty and of Greater Moment; they are very ready and willing to pay that Service which is cheap and easie, and which puts them neither to great pains, nor much cost, but what imports and includes either they are averse to and shrink from. Some will be very *Religious* whilst it is counted *Religion* to *hear the Word of GOD*, to read it and talk of it, to pray and to frequent the *outward Ordinances of the Gospel*, but when they are told of *denying themselves*, *of taking up the Cross, of Mortifying the body, Subduing lust, Bridling their passions*, and particularly, *of distributing their goods to the poor*, then they discover the Naughtiness & Hollowness of their Heart, how much they *mock GOD and deceive themselves:* for they look upon these as hard sayings, and cannot digest them, but with the *Young Man in the Gospel*, *they turn away sad and sorrowful.* Such will seem sometimes to contend earnestly for Heaven, but yet they keep a fast hold of the Earth; they seem very zealous for the *service of GOD* so long as it costs

coſts them nothing, but when Chargeable & Expenſive Duties are required, then they find out many Shifts & Excuſes, they either pretend the non-neceſſity of them, or their own inability; and when none of theſe can be pretended, they ſtill delay and put off till another time, and 'tis very long before they can be drawn to the Performance; & ſome never think it time to bequeath any of their Goods to Pious and Charitable *uſes till Death*, that 'tis impoſſible for them to hold them any longer.

This Pievish and nigardly diſpoſition towards the *Service of GOD* is very far contrary to what the holy *Patriarch Jacob* ſheweth here, where we ſee that as he devoted himſelf to GOD, ſo heartily and freely the *Tenth* of all that he poſſeſſed, By giving this *portion to GOD*, we are to underſtand the allotting and Setling a part the ſame for ſuch Ends and Uſes as tendeth to the *Honour and Glory of GOD*, ſuch as to the maintenance of his Houſe, and his ſervice therein, and to the relief of the Poor and Indigent, for whatſoever is imployed this way, *is given unto GOD:* We cannot reach *himſelf* immediatly with our Preſents & Gifts, *nor ſtands he in any need of them*, but the LORD is pleaſed to take *that as done to himſelf*, *which*

is

is done for the publick good of Mankind, particularly for the relief and comfort of such as are in Poverty and Distress: *Verily I say unto you*, saith our Saviour, *in as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my* Brethren, *ye have done it unto me*; *Mat:* 25. 40.

I doubt not but upon the first view of the title of this Book, it will be apprehended that we intend to assert the *Churches Right to the Tithes*, but as this is a *Doctrine* which few are disposed to hear, so the entering upon this Question would but oblidge us to enlarge this Treatise beyond what we design'd it, and seing a discourse of this head is fitter to be addressed to *Publick States*, than to *private & particular persons*, for whose use only we have intended this, therefore we resolve not to meddle with this Question. However *by the by*, we cannot but say, that whatever may be pretended by the *Law of Nature*, or the *Written Law of GOD*, it is certain that our *Tithes* were *Sacred and Consecrate things, by the Donation and Charity of Men*; and therefore ought never to have been alienated to any profane use. 'Tis true indeed they were most vilely abused by such as possessed them, but their abuse of them did not, neither could annul and cut off GOD'S right unto them. The abuse might have been

rectified

rectified without taking away the uſe of the things themſelves, and certainly the *Sacrilegious robbing of GOD* of what was ſo *Solemnly* and for ſo many *Years Devoted unto him*, is ſuch a ſtain upon our *Reformation*, as that our *Orthodox Faith* and the ſoundneſs of our Judgements, in other Particulars Will never attone or ſufficiently wipe away; theſe words of *St. Paul*, ſeem to touch us very nearly, *thou that abhoreſts Idols, doſt thou commit Sacriledge, Rom:* 2: 22: The *braſen Cenſers* which *Corah* and *his complices* made uſe of; though their uſe of them was not only unwarrantable, but even contrary to the *expreſſe command of GOD*, yet the LORD would not ſuffer them to be caſt away, or to be turned unto any other uſe than that of the *Sanctuary*, but commanded to make of them *Broade plates* for a covering of the Altar: *For*, ſaith he, *they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed*; *Numb.* 16. 38. So notwithſtanding the great abuſe of thoſe things which the *Church* poſſeſſed in the *times of Poperie*, yet being they were once dedicat unto the Lord, therefore they ought never to have been imployed to other than *Sacred uſes*. I ſay, *ſacred uſes*, and not the *Miniſters of the Goſpel only*, for I conteſs the appropriating all that *Wealth to the preſent ſmall*

number

number of the Clergy, *and to their particular use allennarly*, were neither Reasonable nor Convenient: But as this Kingdom would require a greater number to serve in the *Ministry*, so it would be fit and proper to bestow a better Maintenance upon some then what they enjoy. People testifie their respect to GOD, when they Honour His *Servants*, in allowing them a Liberal Maintenance, and indeed as a liberal Share is first due to the *Ministers of the Gospel*, and such as *officiat about Holy Things*; so this might have been given out of what the *Church* formerly possessed, and enough besides for other *pious uses*. Out of what remained, *Hospitals* might have been maintained for *Sick* and *Diseased Persons*, and for a Refuge for such as were decayed through Age or other Infirmitie, and thereby rendred unable for any Calling or Office, there might have been an Allowance for Widows and Orphans, and the training up Children in Lawful Trades, and some Charitable Banks erected for lending Supplies to such, as were broken in their Fortunes, whereby they might Recruite themselves, and be enabled to set up again. I am confident the former *Church Revenues*, and *consecrated Lands* would have been almost sufficient for these things, and this use there-

of

of will I think be acknowledged more for the *publick good* then what they were imployed unto: And as this would have made leſs complaining in our Streets, ſo it would, been more for the *Honour of our Reformation*, and would have ſtoped the mouthes of our *Adverſaries*, whereas now they Cry out, *that the Zeal for the Reformation was not Sincere*, but that there was *more regard to the ſpoiles of the Church, then to the taking away the corruptions thereof*; for which the Pious Mr. *Mede*, and ſome others, are very confident, *GOD will ſome time or other ſignifie his displeaſure by ſome ſignal judgement*, and indeed Sacriledge ſeldome or never paſſed unpuniſhed. But enough of this.

What we intend at preſent is, Firſt, to ſhew that every *Particular Perſon owes to GOD a part of his Eſtate and Fortune, and that GOD doth require and expect it from him.* 2*ly* we ſhal conſider what Proportion or Quality every one ſhould think themſelves oblidged to give. And *Thirdly*, we ſhall propoſe ſome Motives for preſſing home, and ſtirring up to the Practice of this neceſſary, but I ſuppoſe much neglected Duty.

As to the *Firſt*, *that every one owes a part of his eſtate and fortune, to be thus imployed in the exerciſe of Charity towards Men*, is a thing

which will eaſily appear by the Laws of Juſtice and Gratitude; *for all that we have is from GOD*, what ever we poſſeſs comes from His Bounty, and is the effects of his Goodneſs, by whatſoever Means and Methods it hath come unto us. Was thy inheritance intail'd upon the *Bybirth*, thou art nevertheleſs oblidged to GOD allennerly for it, for it was his Providence who Ordered thee to be born in Lawful *Wedlock* of ſuch Rich and Wealthy Parents, it was he alone that cared thus for thee before thou hadſt a beeing, and before thou could'ſt make any choice for thy ſelf. Is all the Fruit of thy Labour and induſtry? Though it be ſo, yet it doth not leſſen they Obligation to GOD, for he gave thee, the Wit and the *Head* by which thou haſt contrived, and the hands by which thou haſt wrought and laboured; and his Wiſdom did appoint and find out all thoſe *Favourable Circumſtances* which have been the occaſion of they Proſperity and ſucceſs; and it is his Providence alone which hath prevented thoſe many Caſualities, which might have deveſted thee of all, ſo that if it had not been for Him, thou mighteſt long agoe been ſtript naked and reduced to a piece of Bread. How many have gone to Bed rich and wealthy and have awakned poor

poor and Miſerable? have we not ſeen perſons turned out of their poſſeſſions, and rob'd of all their Wealth; and who have not been ſo dealt with muſt aſcribe it to the Goodneſs and Care of GOD toward them. Certainly what ever Wealth or Riches, Honour or Advantages any man enjoyeth, is ſtill to be conſidered as the Gift and Gratuity of *Almightie GOD*, as *Jacob* doth here: For he ſaith *not, all that I have, or ſhall have, but all that thou ſhalt give me*; Acknowledging thereby that whatſoever ſhould accrew to him by whatſoever means would be nevertheleſs GOD'S doings. But when I ſay by *whatſoever means*, it is ſtill to be underſtood of lawfull means, for what cometh by unlawfull wayes, as by fraud and violence &c. Is not from GOD, but from him who promiſed to our Saviour *All the Kingdoms of the World if he would fall down and Worſhip him*: And though a man ſhould give all this to the Poor, and in Charitable uſes, it would not be accepted, it would be but an abomination.

But to return, if all be owing to the *Divine bountie*, it is juſt and reaſonable, and our bound Duty to allot and conſecrate a part to his Glory. We are unworthy receivers of his Benefits if we do not thanfully acknow-

ledge his Goodneſs in beſtowing them; and without ſuch an acknowledgement we cannot pretend to a right or ſanctified uſe of them: For the *Apoſtle* tells us, *every Creature of GOD is good, if it be received with thanksgiving*, and not otherwayes, which thankfull acknowledgment muſt be made not only verbally, by Speeches and Expreſſions, but by real works & deeds, *viz.* by devoting a certain part of what we enjoy to ſuch pious uſes as he hath appointed. As *Tenements* own their *Land-Lords*, by paying their yearly rent, and *Subjects* their *Soveraigne* by yeelding tribute, ſo it is no leſs our Duty to *Honour GOD with our ſubſtance* as *Solomon* enjoyneth *Prov.* 3.9. It was thus to honour GOD by acknowledging him to be the LORD and Giver of all, that *David* with the Princes and Captains of *Iſrael* made theſe great offerings for building the Temple of the LORD, and the ſervice of the Sanctuary which we find 1 *Chron.* 29. for verſe 11. David ſaith *thine O LORD is the greatneſs, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majeſtie, for all that is in the Heaven and Earth is thine, thine is the Kingdom O LORD, and thou art exalted as Head above all: both Riches and Honour come of thee, and thou Reigneſt over all, and in thy hand is power and might, and in thy Hand it is to*

make

make great and to give ſtrength unto all; now therefore our GOD we thank thee, and praiſe thy Glorious Name, and of thine own have we given thee.

Now as Reaſon teacheth it to be juſt, thus to honour and acknowledge GOD, by conſecrating a part of our Subſtance to his Glory, and for his uſe, ſo there never was a time wherein GOD did not particularly require it. In the State of Innocency there was not occaſion for almes or other ſuch pious uſes as now, but the tree of knowledge in the midſt of the Garden was reſerv'd to GOD as holy in token that he was Lord of the Garden; and therefore was man caſt out of Paradiſe and had the earth curſed for his ſake becauſe he had violated the ſign of his Fealtie unto the LORD of Heaven and Earth. After the fall untill the Law of *Moſes*, we do not indeed find any expreſſe particular precept for making ſuch offering out of our ſubſtance to GOD, but yet all holy men did it; *Jacob* you ſee here vowed it, and *Abraham* gave *the tenth of his Spoil to Melchiſedeck the high Prieſt of GOD.* And though reaſon and the meer light of nature, might teach them that ſomething was due and proper to be given, yet we cannot conjecture, how they could come to condeſcend ſo generally upon ſuch a Particular Portion

Portion without learning it by Divine revelation. In the law of *Moſes* the *Tithes* of all things are expreſly Commanded to be payed as an acknowledgment of GOD'S being the Proprietar of the whole Earth, and that men hold their poſſeſſions only by his bounty and good will therefore *Deut:* 26. As there is a Command for paying *Tithes*, and bringing the *Firſt Fruits* as an offering unto the houſe of the LORD, ſo there is ſet down the particular confeſſion to be made at theſe Offerings in which is ſhewed the reaſon for requiring them *viz:* That even GOD'S *Title* to the whole land might be acknowledged, and that he might thereby be moved to bleſs the poſſeſſion thereof to them, ſeing that they thus own him to be their *LORD and GOD.* Now as for the *Goſpel*, this *Precept* is not renewed in it; and the Ceremonies of *Bringing up to the houſe of GOD*, *the firſt Fruits of our encreaſe and what is due out of our Subſtance*, doth not much concern us: But though the *Ceremonial part* of this *Precept* be not now obligatorie, yet the *Moral* thereof is; for CHRIST hath not taken away our Obligation to theſe *moral obſervances*, which the Honour of GOD calls for, *think not*, ſaith he, *that I am come t*[o] *deſtroy the Law or the Prophets*, *I am not come t*[o]

deſtro[o]

deſtroy, but to fulfil; *Matth.* 5. 17. There is not indeed in the *New Teſtament* ſuch *frequent* and particular *mention* of making theſe *offerings* by *way of Tribute* unto GOD, becauſe there we are not conſidered as in a *Servile State*, by the *Goſpel* GOD hath exalted us to *the Nobler State of Friends and Children*, and deals with us as ſuch, which yet doth not take away our *obligation* from paying *neceſſary Duties*, whereof the thing we are now ſpeaking about is one. And though as we have ſaid the *Devoting ſome portion of our Goods*, be not now called ſo *by way of Tribute* as from *Servants* or *Subjects*, yet the thing it ſelf is very often injoyned and inculcated, *viz. of Almes giving*, *Beneficencie*, and *Works of Charity* & *Mercie*,& though *the phraſe of giveing* Almes be generally uſed, yet it is ſo ſpoken of, as to let us underſtand that it is a debt due unto GOD which we are unjuſt if we do not pay: for it is uſually Styled *Juſtice* or *Righteouſneſs*, as *Mat.* 25.

We muſt not think that GOD hath now under the *Goſpel* quit his *Right* and *Tittle* to our Goods and Poſſeſſions, or that he doth not require any acknowledgment of them from us; we are much miſtaken if we think ſo, He requires this now as much as ever; and therefore to this end it is, that his

his *Providence continues to* Poor *and Diſtreſſed perſons in the World*, and other occaſions of doing good. *Ye have*; ſaith our *Saviour*, *the Poor alwayes with you*; *Mat:* 26. 11. Which is the repetition of a *Promiſe* made *Deut:* 15. 11. Where it is ſaid *The Poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the land, therefore I command thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy Poor, and thy Needy, in thy land.* The *Poor* and *Diſtreſſed* are GOD'S *Aſſignes*, to them he hath aſſigned the *Debts we owe Him*; or we may look upon them as *his Chamberlanes* whom he hath appointed to take up his Rents; by them he doth as 'twere *Draw Bills* upon us for what is due to himſelf, and when they aske us in *GOD'S Name*, 'tis no Forgery, they have GOD'S Warrant and Commiſſion for it: Wherefore as the Wiſe man teacheth, *with hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.* Prov: 3: 27. *Thou ſhalt not harden thine heart, nor ſhut thine hand from thy Poor Brother ſaith the LORD, but thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto him, and ſhall ſurely lend him ſufficient for his need in that which he wanteth.* *Deut:* 15. 7. The Poor and Needy are GOD'S *Altars*, whereon we muſt *offer Sacrifice*; and ſeing he hath broken down theſe other Altars of ſtone which were

were *under the* Law, and hath freed us from the burden of theſe many *expenſive Sacrifices* which were then required, we ſhould not take in our hand, nor be ſparing in the *works of Charity and Mercy*, but ſhould look upon our ſelves as oblidg'd in all juſtice and Gratitude to abound in them the more Liberally. GOD hath not abrogat *Sacrifices* and *Oblations* altogether, but only chang'd the uſe of them, and the way and manner of offering them; he will have them offered upon *Living Altars*, for the greater Comfort and delight of the Sons of Men: and as by the *Law* many *Sacrifices* and *Offerings* were exacted of the *Worſhippers*, ſo the *Goſpel* now requires *Almes and charitable deeds no leſſe*; and *as under the* Law, *he who contemned ſacrifices, and refuſed oblations, was not counted Religious towards GOD, but without all fear of Him*; ſo now under the *Goſpel*, they muſt be reckoned void of all *Piety* and *Devotion*. who do not expreſs it by works of *Charity* and *Mercy* which are our *Spiritual Sacrifices* for *St. James* tells us, *that pure Religion and undefiled before GOD, and the Father is to viſite the Fatherleſs, and Widows in their affliction, and to keep our ſelves unſpotted from the World*. *Jam.* 1. 29.

Thus we have made out our *obligation to devote ſome part of our Goods to GOD*, that is to

Works of Piety and Charity, becauſe it is expreſly commanded. 'Tis both a *Sign* and an *Eſſential part of Religion*, and 'tis a neceſſary Act of Homage whereby we acknowledge GOD to be the *Soveraign of the World, and the true Owner of all our Poſſeſſions.* He therefore who gives nothing this way, tranſgreſſeth a *Divine command*, caſts off the *Badge of Religion*, and is not only unjuſt to Men but to GOD; he rebelleth againſt the LORD of Heaven and Earth, in refuſing to pay Tribute which is due, and whereby our Vaſſallage is ſignified.

It follows next, that we ſhew what *quantity or proportion of our ſtate ſhould be payed unto God.* It is ordinarly thought that Alms is an Arbitrary thing, left altogether to Peoples own Diſcretion; and that being their Goods are their own, they may give as much or as little as they pleaſe, without deſerving any blame: But truly it's not ſo left to Peoples own Diſcretion; For he is as unjuſt both to GOD and Man, who gives nothing in Charity, ſo one may give and yet be nevertheleſs uncharitable, and conſequently undutiful to GOD, becauſe he gives not enough, not proportionally to his Eſtate, and that meaſure of Wealth which GOD hath beſtowed on him. *Little will be accepted of, from him who*

who hath little; but to whom *much is given, of them much will be required*, and to whom *is committed much, of him the more will be asked*, as it is *Luke* 12. 48. Our LORD indeed commended the poor Widow *for casting in two mites into the Treasury of the Temple:* But that will not justifie the unworthy custome, which is now become very general, of throwing a Penny or Farthing or thereabouts to our offering when we come up to the *House of GOD*; nor because of this, have any reason to think they deserve Commendation, if they in any thing exceed the *Widows alms*, unless what they give, bear as great a proportion to their Fortune as her two *mites* did to hers. Now saith Christ, *all these have of their abundance cast in unto the Offering of GOD, but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had*, *Luke* 21. 4. Wherefore every one ought to give proportionally as God hath blessed him, and when a Mans Alms or Charity beareth no proportion to his Means and Estate, he may deservedly be charged with Ingratitude to God, and a Defrauding him of his Dues, even as he is unjust who payeth not the *just reddenda* of his *Charters*, and the real *Take-duty* of the Lands he possesseth.

Now in finding out the *true proportion of our Alms and Charity*, as we must consider

our own Ability and *God's bounty* towards us, ſo we muſt diſtinguiſh between ordinary and extraordinary Occaſions: for neither can all Men give alike, nor is any oblidged to the ſame meaſure at all times. Men are bound to be more Liberal and Charitable in times of great Dearth, Famine and Scarcity, when many People are ready to periſh for want at ſuch Occaſions, there is no other ſet rule but the neceſſities of People, which every one who hath muſt be careful to adminiſter unto. Then theſe Precepts, *Go ſell all that thou haſt, and give unto the poor. Let him that hath two Coats give to him that hath none, and let him that hath bread do ſo likewiſe,* theſe I ſay muſt be obeyed even to the very ſtrictnes of the Letter: For we are but ſtewards of the good things which we receive and muſt deſpenſe them out again when God calls for them; as certainly he doth on all ſuch Occaſions, when it is not poſſible otherwiſe to keep People from Starving, As Stewards we ought firſt to ſerve our ſelves and then to diſtribute to the reſt of the Family; but he is an unjuſt Steward, who leteth any want or periſh for hunger, if he hath beſide him wherewith to ſupply them. Hence 'twas that the Diſciples and the firſt *Converts to Chriſtianity*, did ſell their whole poſ-

poſſeſſions and gave them to the *Treaſury of the poor:* they had all things then in common, and it is *St. Pauls* advice to the *Corinthians, that every man lay by in ſtore what God hath proſpered him, viz. For the poor*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. which rule and practice is not alwayes binding, nor are any now tyed to follow the ſame unleſs we were in the ſame circumſtances.

But leaving what is extraordinary, we will ſpeak to that which men are oblidg'd to, even when there is no ſuch great or univerſal Calamity: As in times of Dearth and Famine all muſt be given, if it be neceſſary; ſo even at other times, we muſt be carefull to devote ſomthing to God, and the uſe of his *poor Servants.* That proportion which *Jacob vowed* here, was the practice of all the Patriarchs and *Servants of God before the Law:* When the Law was given by *Moſes*, God required the *firſt fruits* of all things, and *one Tithe* for the uſe of the *Prieſts and Levites*; he commanded alſo *another Tithe* every third year for the uſe of the poor *Deut.* 14. 28. The firſt *Tithe* was *Debitum fundi*, the tribute upon the Land, and may be called GOD'S *ground-rent*, or *Few duty* which the very Land owed to him: The other *Tithe* was *Debitum Perſonæ*, which every one

one owed out of his own property, thereby to make an acknowledgment of God's Favour and kindneſs to him, in allowing him Poſſeſſions while others wanted.

But beſides this *Trienial Tithe*, they were ordained every year *to leave the corners of their field at Harveſt*, & were forbiden either to reap the reſt of their field clean, or to gather all the fruit of their Vine yards, but to leave in them for the poor, *Lev.* 19. 9. And moreover every *ſeventh year*, the poor and Stranger had the whole profite of all the land. ſee, *Exod.* 23. 11. All which reckoned together, the *Jews* beſides the *Tithes* to the *Prieſts* & other Publick Dues, will be found to have payed more then the tenth of their *yearly incomes* for the uſe of the poor only. Which proportion, though it be not exacted by any expreſſe poſitive Law repeated in the *Goſpel*, yet all Good and Holy Perſons have ever look'd upon themſelves as oblidg'd to it in ſtrict Juſtice, ſeing the *Jews* were tyed to it. Some offered to prove *Tithes* due to GOD from the *Law of Nature*, but I could never ſee any forcible argument why either the *tenth* of our Eſtate, or the *ſeventh of our time* ſhould be allotted and condeſcended on if we abſtract from *Divine Revelation*, and the expreſſe Command of GOD: certainly as

the

one concerning the proportion of our time ſo the other which meaſures the quantity of our Goods and Eſtate, hath been fallen upon by the particular direction of GOD himſelf. And therefore ſeing the *Worſhippers of GOD* under the *Old Teſtament* were oblidg'd to give the *tenth* of all they poſſeſſed, I cannot underſtand how any can be ſatisfyed with giving leſſe under the *New Teſtament*. Our Righteouſneſs muſt not come ſhort of thoſe *under the Law, I ſay unto you, ſaith CHRIST, that except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; *Mat.* 5. 10. If therefore they gave the *tenth*, ſure we can do no leſs. This is no part of the *Ceremonial Law* abrogated by the *Goſpel*, for as the Devoting ſomething is clear by *Natural Light*, ſo this *quotum* we ſee was enjoyned before the *Law*; and there is ſo little reaſon for mincing it now, that there is much Reaſon rather to Augment it, for we live under a clearer light, have received greater manifeſtations of *GOD'S Love* and *better promiſes*, that is, Promiſes wherein *a future happy Life* is more plainly expreſt. We pay 6 of the hundred for the uſe of Money, and ſometimes more for the exchange of it, now the *tenth* is but *four* more, and ſhall we grudge to give this to GOD

GOD for the property, when we are oblidged to give the other to men for the ſimple loan and uſe. Sure none will refuſe this, or think it too much after they have ſeriouſly conſidered the matter, but ſuch as are too much oblidg'd to the World, and are but too little ſenſible of their obligations to Love and Honour GOD. How ſmall a matter is an 100 *Merks* to him whom GOD hath Bleſſed with a 1000 free of yearly Rent? He who hath much over and above the Payment of Publick and Particular Burdens, may very well let one go to the poor in Teſtimony of his *Thankfulneſs to GOD who giveth all Liberally. But would to GOD!* That Men in his *Degenerate Age* could be prevailed on to give the *fifteenth* or *ſixteenth part* of their *yearly gain* and *incomes*, which is but the proportion of the *Ordinary annual-rent of Money* in this *Countrey:* & unleſs they be reſolved to baulke this *Duty of Charity* altogether I cannot underſtand how they can ſatisfy their Conſciences with leſſe then this comes to; if they will not be convinc'd of their Obligation to pay the *tenth*, yet I hope at leaſt they will acknowledge themſelves bound to be *as Thankful to GOD as to Man*, and to return him as much for the Property as they give to, and exact of others for the Loan and uſe. If one

one were borrowing a 1000 *Merks*, he would give *Fourty Pounds* in the year for it; now he who hath a *Thousand merks per annum free*, I think should be ashamed to offer less then *fourty pounds* to *God*, or indeed to give so little.

I suppose my *Reader* before this time is convinc'd of the necessity of Obeying and Honouring GOD, and that the *Communicating a part of our goods for the use of the Poor*, &c. Is one instance of our Obedience, and one necessary way of *Honouring him*: Now he who is thus convinc'd, may be easily perswaded of his Obligations not to reckon with God too narrowly or particularly; but that he ought to be as free and Liberal in the Expressions of his *Thankfulness* as GOD is to him in the effects of his Bounty. Every one hath more then he deserves, and the rich have more then they can lawfully ask, for *Daylie Bread* is all we are allowed to Pray for, and considering what *Sinners* we are, 'tis more then we are worthy of, and therefore when GOD hears our *Lawful Desires*, yea gives beyond them, I think common Equity should teach us to deall with him in like manner, and to give back more, at least as much as he seeks from us, that is, I think we should not hesitate at the *Tenth*, but give even over and above,

if our *Circumstances* will allow it: If we think the quantity of our Charity be wholly left to our own Discretion, then should not the Rules of Discretion teach us to give rather more then what would be sought? Now the *tenth* was required before the *Law* and under *the Law*, and there can be no Reason pretended why it should be abated under the *Gospel*.

Let me therefore entreat all who would keep a Conscience void of offence in this particular, to consider how GOD hath Blessed them, what is their yearly Rent, Gain, or Income to give *GOD His due* out of the same freely and Chearfully. And whatsoever they purpose in their Heart to give, I would advise them to set it a part by it self, to separate it from what is reserved to their own use, for hereby several Advantages would arise. *First*, They shall be sure to make no encroachment on what they *Devote to GOD*, which would be no lesse then the *Heinous sin of Sacriledge*. 2*ly*. They should hereby give more Readily and Chearfully, because they have so much by them, for no other use then to be given. 3*ly*. This would make them seek out occasions of bestowing Charity, and not wait until Occasions present themselves which is an Ordinary fault, and the

the Reaſon why this Duty is ſo ſeldome performed; who devotes a certain part of their Goods and eſtate to GOD, ſhould do as Men uſe when they have Mony of a Friend, en ſeek out Good hands to lay it in.

Perhaps 'twill be beſt to pay this Debt to GOD in *Parcels* as our gain and Advantages come in; for as hereby we ſhall beſt know whither we doe juſtly agreeable to our vow or purpoſe, ſo 'twill be more convenient, & a leſſe Tentation to grudging, then if all were payed together. And beſides what we think fit thus to *Conſecrate to GOD*, for his *Ordinary conſtant Kindneſs to us*, 'twill be proper to enlarge our hand on ſpecial Occaſions, as upon the receit of ſome *particular Mercy*, or in time of Sickneſs or other Affliction, that we may give a Teſtimony of joy and thankfulneſs for the firſt, and ſecure ſome *Special comfort* to our ſelves in the laſt caſe.

Some it may be will imagine that all this doth only concern the Rich and Wealthy, but let none be ſo miſtaken. Theſe indeed are eſpecially Oblidged to give Almes, or rather they are Oblidged to large and *Liberal Meaſures*: But others are not exeemed from *Works* of Charity, this is a Duty incumbent on all. Who have Much, muſt give Much, who have much of this Worlds

Goods and Little to do with them, are oblidged to beſtow more this way then thoſe of equal Fortune, but who have more to do with it, as having more Children, or being Oblidg'd to keep a greater retinue: but even all who are not themſelves objects of Charity are oblidged to contribute ſomething to the relief of the Poor and indigent thereby to teſtify their Homage to, and Dependence upon God; and if Perſons be wiling, they eaſily may render themſelves able to do either more or leſs. They who live on their proper induſtry, and have nothing but as they earn it, may lay by a dayes or half dayes work in the Week, & Servants who work to others may give a part of their Wages, or one or two Meals a week; and if every one ſtudy to enable themſelves, and give according to their Ability, though it be little 'twill be as acceptable as the gifts of the Rich. I never ſaw the meaner ſort of People, even ſuch as ſeem ſcarce to have their neceſſaries, but they would find out ſome ſhift for Money when they had a Friends or Neighbours Marriage to go to, and ſure if they were as intent upon *Charitable Deeds*, they might take the ſame courſe to enable them thereto. The want of ability therefore proceeds too often from the want

want of will, 'tis becauſe we think not our ſelves Oblidged to doe Good, or that 'tis enough if we do any though never ſo little: but we ſhould conſider that we ought to lay our ſelves out to this, we ſhould be induſtrious in this matter, and ought to endeavor as much to be Rich in *good Works*, as to be *Rich in Worldly goods*; nay the main Reaſon why we ſhould Labour to be rich towards the World, is that we may be *Rich towards GOD*, and that we may have to give to them that need.

Which leads me to the *Third* and *Laſt thing* propoſed, *viz:* to give ſome Motives to Perſwade and Excite to the Exerciſe of this *Duty of Charity*.

And *Firſt*, we ſhall begin with what indeed ſhould be the *Chief end* of ſuch *good works*, and *alms deeds*, and *the Principle* from which they ſhould flow, *viz:* The *Love of GOD and deſire of pleaſing him*. Though one would give never ſo much this way, even all his goods to feed the Poor, if 'twere not out of *Love to GOD*, 'twould profite nothing, he would neither find Acceptance nor Reward: But as what we do of this kind ſhould be out of *Love to GOD*, ſo if we have any *Sincere Love* to him, any true Regard for him, any *Hearty* deſire to inſinuate our ſelves

ſelves in his Favour, we cannot but be forward to, and much ſet upon the works of *Charity* and *Mercy:* Becauſe he Delights in theſe things, is well pleaſed with them, and truly oblidged by them. *To doe good and to communicat forget not, ſaith St. Paul, for with ſuch ſacrifices GOD is well pleaſed, Heb:* 13. 16. And writing to the *Philippians* of the ſupply they ſent him, he tells them *'twas an odour of Sweet ſmell, a ſacrifice acceptable, well pleaſing to GOD. Phil:* 4. 18. I ſhall not offer to ſhew how much we ought to *Love GOD*, or how much it is our intereſt to *ſeek his Favour*, for who will not acknowledge it? But certainly if we have any *love to him* for the many *Bleſſings Spiritual & Temporal* beſtowed on us, or be deſirous to ſecure his Kindneſs for the time to come; we will exerciſe our ſelves in acts of *Charity*, ſeing they are ſo acceptable to him. Every good and *Charitable deed* gratifies GOD, and endears us to him; hereby we both requite his *paſt Favour*, and alſo ſecure his *future love.* O how fond are People of Occaſions of oblidging Kings, Princes, and other great Perſons? How much will they ſtretch themſelves even beyond their Power, to get rare and acceptable preſents to offer them? with what joy will they receive them into their houſes, if they

they have the leaſt hope thereby to make Court, and to obtain acts of Grace from them? But O how ſmall a happineſs is this? And how contemptible in Compariſon of that which ariſeth from occaſions of *Gratifying GOD*, for his court is not unſtable like Earthly Courts, his Favour is a certain thing, and attended with many more deſirable Bleſſings. Now all the occaſions of doing good, are as many occaſions of *Gratifying and obliging* GOD; he who is capable of giving *Charity* is capable of *befriending GOD*, and of engaging his Love; *to feed the hungry, to cloath the naked, to looſe the priſoner, and to doe other acts of charity, is to entertain GOD himſelf*: *For in as much*, ſaith CHRIST, *as ye have done it to one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren ye have done it to me. Mat:* 25. 40. And ſeing GOD thus preſents himſelf to us in the perſons of the *Poor*, we may very well ſay with *St. Iohn*, *Who ſo hath this Worlds goods, and ſeeth his brother have need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of GOD in him?* 1. *Iohn.* 3. 17.

Secondly, It is a generous and praiſe-worthy thing to be *Charitable*. To be ſet upon doing good is both lovely in it ſelf, and in the eyes of all the World; this gains the hearts

Hearts, and wins the Affections of all. Wit, Learning, Dexterity, and Courage will be talk'd of indeed with ſome Admiration, but *Bounty* and *Charity* is truly lov'd and Eſteemed; inſtances of theſe do tickle the Fancy chiefly, but this really affects the Hearts of all who know it. Every ones heart is open to embrace him whoſe hands are alwayes ready to the releif of the Poor and Miſerable every Mouth bleſſeth him, and every tongue ſpeaks of his Praiſe; People honour his Preſence, Pray for his Life, and count it a Bleſſing, and when he is *gone hence his memory is dear to them:* Such an one needs no Braſs Statue, or Marble Tomb to perpetuate his Name, it never rots, but laſteth to many Generations, and like precious Ointment has ſtill a *ſweet Savour*, which refreſheth the *Spirits* of thoſe who ſmell it. The *Righteous* ſaith the *Pſalmiſt* (that is *the Charitable Man*, as appears from the context) *ſhall be in everlaſting remembrance. Pſ.* 112. 6 And how can it be otherwiſe? for

Thirdly, *Charity* is a *God-like thing*, it makes a Man truly reſemble GOD in the moſt Lovely of his Attributes (if I may be allowed to ſpeak ſo.) GOD'S *Omnipotence* and *Omniſcience* are proper Objects of fear and Reverence, but 'tis the conſideration of his

his Goodneſs which eſpecially begets our *Love to him*; yea 'tis this which makes him moſt Glorious, therefore when he ſhewed his Glory to *Moſes*, he did it by proclaiming his Name, *the LORD GOD, Merciful, and Gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs*, &c. *Exod:* 34. 6. Becauſe *Goodneſs* is the chiefeſt of the *Divine Attributes*, therefore the reſt are ſet on work for the manifeſtation thereof; his Wiſdom contrives, and his Power Acts, that by both he may ſhew his Goodneſs, *his Mercies are over all his Works.* Now as 'twill be acknowledged the *Higheſt Perfection* to be *like GOD* ſo the beſt and trueſt *Likeneſs to him* is to ſtudy to be *good and Merciful* as he is *Good* and *Merciful:* Though we could come to ſome reſemblance of his Wiſdom and Power, 'twould neither *endear us to Him*, nor to others, ſo much as the imitation of his Goodneſs. Who therefore would be *Like GOD*, who are Acted with ſuch an *High* and *holy Ambition*, let them buſie themſelves in *doing good*, and according to their Power let them abound in *Works of Charity* and *Mercy:* For hereby they ſhall become partakers of the *Divine Nature*, and ſhall purchaſe a right to the ſame *Tittles* which GOD takes to himſelf in *Scripture*, and indeed glories in, as *the Father of Mer-*

cies and Comforts, the Helper of the helpleſs, the Reliever of the needy, & ſuch as are diſtreſſed, &c. The half of the Money which ſome lay out for Worldly *Tittles* would procure theſe *Divine Deſignations*, which are by far preferrable, and upon many conſiderations more Honourable.

Fourthly, this Duty *of Charity* is moſt pleaſant and taking, 'tis not more for the Comfort of the diſtreſſed, then 'tis for the ſatisfaction of the *Charitable Man* himſelf: wherefore our *Saviour* ſaid, *It is more bleſſed to give then to receive*; *Acts* 20. 35. Acts of Bounty and Charity truly rejoice the Heart, and fill the Soul with large meaſures of ſolid joy; there is far more Joy in *Spiritual Exerciſes*, then in any other; other pleaſures are but *skin deep*, they are only ſome Titillations in the Body which ſoon evaniſh; but the Joy which reſults from Vertue and *Religious exerciſes* peirceth the Heart, and cauſeth the very Spirit to exult: and there is in Particular a ſpecial Pleaſure in doing Good. As the deſires of doing Good are of all other the Nobleſt, which made a *Heathen Poet* to call them *Senſus pars Optima Noſtri*, ſo certainly the fulfilling thereof is attended with the Chiefeſt Satisfaction, has a guſt and reliſh proper to delight a *Heaven born Soul*. 'Tis but ſmall delight

delight which cometh from dainty Morſels, quaffing of Healths, for theſe are Bruitiſh exerciſes and inferiour to the Dignity *of our Natures*: But to *feed the hungry*, *to afford drink to the thirſty Soul*, to *cloath the naked*, to *comfort thoſe who mourn*, to *ſave the life which is ready to periſh*, and other the like *Charitable deeds*, are Exerciſes *worthy of GOD himſelf*, he delights in them, and how can it but delight and rejoyce us to be ſo Nobly and Divinely imployed? If Men have reared up magnificent *Structures*, great *Buildings*, and made fine Gardens about them, they are ready to contemplate them with vanity, as *Nebuchadnedzar* did his *Babylon*, ſaying, *Is not this great Babylon which I built:* O how mean a thing is it to be vain of theſe works which Wind and Weather can deface, Storms batter down, and time wear out! But certainly there is Reaſon to rejoyce in being inſtrumental to rear up *living fabricks*, to repair the *Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*, and to preſerve thoſe who are capable to *ſound forth the praiſes of GOD to all Eternity*. If People will but conſult their Reaſon, and reflect on their own little Experience, they cannot but be perſwaded of the unſpeakable Pleaſure *in doing Good*, *in contributing ſeaſonable comfort and relief to their fellow Brethren*, in being able

to ſtep in and pull them out of ſome *Sad Straite*, or to hold off the weight of a Croſſe whoſe preſſure is likely to fill them with exceſſive grief: 'Tis only the conſideration of this pleaſure, which makes Worldly Greatneſs deſireable or Supportable, for abſtracting from this, 'tis an uſeleſſe burden, and a great impertinence which a Wiſe Man would ſhun and ſeek to be rid of.

Fifthly, *Acts of Charity and Bounty* are moſt profitable; and that upon many Accounts, *First*, they are Profitable, becauſe hereby the Creatures of GOD are *Sanctified* to our uſe, and our enjoyment of them becomes Lawful, *Every creature of GOD is good*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *and nothing to be refuſed, if it be received with thanksgiving*; 1 Tim: 4: 4. The Creatures are only good then, when thanksgiving is Joined to the uſe of them, which thanksgiving doth conſiſt in a deep ſenſe of GODS Propriety in the Creatures, and of his goodneſs in beſtowing them upon us, & this ſenſe muſt be expreſſed not only in Words but Deeds. The violating the Signs of GODS *Dominion over the Creatures* brought a curſe upon them, for this cauſe *the Earth was curſed to us*; and this curſe is not removed, but by returning to our Allegiance, by making an acknowledgement of GODS

GOD'S Right and Dominion, in paying the Tribute which is due, and which he requires: The neglect of this keeps GOD from bleſſing our enjoyments, this is the reaſon why ſome as the *Prophet Haggai* ſpeaks, *ſow much and bring little, eat but have not enough; drink but are not filled with drink; Cloath themſelves but are not warm; earn wages but 'tis put as 'twere into a bagge with holes Hag:* 1: 6: And as the giving GOD his due, ſanctifieth the Creatures by taking away the curſe upon them, So it rendreth our enjoyment of them Lawful and Sweet. We may freely uſe the Creatures, may *Eat our Meat with gladneſs, and Singleneſs of heart*, when we have diſcharged the Debt lying thereon, and payed the tribute of Gratitude we owe to GOD: But without this, our enjoyments can have no Delicious Reliſh, nor afford true ſatisfaction: They are attended with remorſe and ſting of Conſcience, as the feaſting of *Bankrupts*, or the riotous living of *Tennents*, who have not payed their Maſters rent. 'Tis not Lawfull to ſit down to full Tables, to be alwayes Eating the fat, and drinking the Sweet, whiles there is no regard of thoſe who are at the *point of ſtarving*; 'tis not Lawfull for any to ruffle it out in Silke, to hang their rooms with *Arras* & other coſtly hangings,

ings, whiles they see any perish for want of Cloathing, or any Poor without covering, and will not offer to help them, that *their Loins may Blesse them* as *Job* speaks, 'Tis an heinous crime which will not pass unpunished, *to cast the Childrens Bread to Dogs*; and are not they guilty of it who spend much on *Dogs*, *Hawks*, and other idle sports, but give nothing to the *Supply of the Poor*, the *Fatherless*, and *Widow?* But as the Enjoyments and pleasures of uncharitable Persons are unlawful and accursed, so who exerciseth *Charity* may lawfully indulge his desires, and allow himself what *Innocent Comforts* and conveniences this World affords.

Secondly, *Charity* is profitable for securing and preserving the Good things a Man hath; Every *days experience may teach us the uncertainty of Earthly things*; one may have much and soon come to Poverty; Fire, Violence, Treachery, and a thousand other Accidents, to which all are exposed, may very easily devest a man of his Wealth and Possessions, and 'tis impossible to prevent this, by our Foresight, Care, and Industry: our chief, yea, only security is in the *Divine Providence*, which we may lean to, if we testify our thankfulness by acts of *Charity and Bounty to the Poor*. By giving to the *Poor*, we

we *clip the wings of Riches*, ſo that they can not flee ſo faſt from us: But if the Poor be not the better of our Wealth it wants the *Divine protection*, and ſo is altogether defenceleſs, it hath no ſure hedge about it. By denying the *Tribute of Charity* we break our *Tacks*, forfeit our right by which we hold our Poſſeſſions: And as Maſters uſe to turn out thoſe *Tennents* who pay not their Rent, ſo GOD taketh away the good things of this World from them who do not uſe them to his Glory, nor make any acknowledgment to him for them, or if he let them keep them, 'tis becauſe he reſerves them to a *Heavier judgement.*

Thirdly, *Charity* is profitable, becauſe it tendeth to the encreaſe of our Wealth and Eſtate. As 'tis the beſt means to preſerve our Fortune, ſo 'tis the likelieſt way to enlarge it: *The Bleſſing of the LORD it maketh Rich, and he addeth no ſorrow with it*; *Prov:* 10. 22. Which Bleſſing is particularly entailed on the *Charitable Man*, and therefore *Moſes* having commanded to pay the *Triennial Tithes* to the Poor, addeth for an encouragment, *That the LORD thy GOD may bleſſe thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doeſt*, *Deut:* 14: 29: Some are ready with *Judas* to *count all loſt which comes not into their own bagge*, but what is given in *Charity*

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is ſo far from loſſe, that 'tis great Gain, it returns with Uſury. *He that hath pity on the Poor, lendeth to the LORD, and that which he hath given will he pay him again. Prov:* 19. 17. And that more may be expected then what is laid out we learn from many Texts in *Scripture, The liberal Soul ſhall be made fat, and he that wattereth ſhall alſo be wattered himſelf, Prov.* 11. 25. Alms and Charitable Deeds may ſeem to impoveriſh us, but really they do it no otherwiſe then the *Husband* Mans throwing his Seed upon the Ground, which after ſome Moneths he receives with encreaſe; *There is that Scattereth*, ſaith *Solomon*, *and yet encreaſeth; and there is that withholdeth more then is meet, but it tendeth to* Poverty. And becauſe *Charity* contributes as much to Wealth as the ordinary way and Arts of Thriving, therefore he adviſeth to uſe it, *In the morning*, ſaith *he, ſow thy ſeed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand for thou knoweſt not whither ſhall proſper, either this or that, or whither they both ſhall be a like good. Eccl: 11: 6.* Men indeed ought not to uſe *Charity* with this Deſign to be Rich, but neither need they be Diſcouraged from the Exerciſe thereof, for fear of redacting themſelves to Poverty: for this is the ready way not only to prevent Poverty, but to enſure Wealth,

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if the *Word of GOD* may be reſted on. And who but Infidels will not rely on it? GOD'S hand is both the ſureſt and moſt profitable Bank to put our Money in, other Perſons and States may, and we ſee dayly do break and fail, but he will never fail nor turn unable to repay us with Advantage he hath promiſed perhaps to try *Mens ſincerity*. GOD will keep up for ſome time this gain of Charity, but they ſhall receive it at one time or another; Many inſtances might be produced of theſe Advantagious returns of *Charity*, but I chooſe rather to let every one recollect their reading and Experience in this point, then to detain them farther. What doeſt thou know (they are the words of *a dear Friend*) *but thoſe ſhowres which did lately refreſh thy corn, that proſperous gale which brought home thy commodity unto the deſired haven, that advantagious bargain which thou haſt made, that plea of of Law which thou haſt gain'd may have been deſigned as a recompence of which thou haſt beſtowed? However I am ſure that no Man ſhall have occaſion to complain that he is a loſer at GOD'S hands, and that he hath been decieved by that promiſe, that he who giveth to the Poor ſhall not lack.*

Fourthly, *Charity* is profitable in that it either prevents the *days of evil* or procures us

ſolide Comfort in them. *Man is born to trouble as the ſparks flee upward*; we are *but of few dayes*, but we are lyable to many Troubles, and therefore every *wiſe Man* ſhould provide againſt them: but the beſt *Proviſion* we can lay up againſt the evil day *of affliction*, is to be *liberal* and *Charitable* in Proſperity. When *Daniel* laid before *Nebuchadnezar* the diſaſters of his Dream, he adviſed him to take this courſe to prevent them: *O King, ſaid he, let my counſel be acceptable unto thee, and breake off thy ſins by righteouſneſs, and thine iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the Poor, if it may be a lengthning if thy Tranquility*, Dan. 4. 27. But if *Charity* doth not altogether prevent *Calamity* and *Affliction*, 'twill be ſure to lighten them, and to give us Comfort in them, even ſolide Comfort, the Conſolations of GOD. Riches profite little in the *dayes of evil*, friends may then ſtand aloofe, or if they come near, all they can do is to weep and waile; true and certain comfort cometh only from *above*, which *a Charitable Man* is ſure of. For *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the Poor. the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preſerve him & keep him alive and he ſhall be bleſſed upon the Earth, and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies? The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing, thou wilt*

make

make all his bed in his ſickneſs. Pſal. 41. 1. 2. 3. If ſaith the *Prophet Iſaiah*, *thou draw out thy Soul to the hungry, and ſatisfy the afflicted Soul, then ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy Darkneſs be as noon day, and the* LORD *ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatisfy thy Soul in drought, and make fat thy bones, and thou ſhalt be like a wattered Garden, and like a ſpring of Watters whoſe watters fail not.* Iſa. 58. 10. 11.

Fifthly, the profite of *Charity* goeth farther then Earth, it reacheth to Heaven, and gets us an intereſt there. 'Tis true *Heaven is not merited by any deed of ours*, we muſt not entertain any ſuch thought: but certainly ſuch good Deeds are followed with *Heaven & happineſs of the other Life.* How much reſpect GOD will have to Acts of *Charity and Mercy* in beſtowing Heaven, we may ſee from *Mat.* 25. and therefore *St. Paul* would have the Rich *to do Good, to be rich in good works, ready to diſtribut, willing to communicate*, thereby *laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 18. 19. Here is the greateſt advantage of *Charity*, and here we may ſee that the moſt profitable way of expending our Wealth, is to lay it out upon *Works of Charity:* For the profit of all other Works is limited to this life; the good of

them as to us expires with our Breath, and 'tis but ſeldom that it laſteth ſo long; when a man dies he carries nothing away of all that he hath done otherwayes, except perhaps a troubled Conſcience for being imployed ſo much to ſo little purpoſe. But the profit of good and *Charitable Works* accompanieth a man to the Grave, nay followeth him to the *other World* and purchaſeth Friends there, *Friends which never die*, and which *receive* and welcome him *to their everlaſting Habitations*. And ſeeing it is ſo, what ſenſeleſneſs is it to neglect *Charity?* How much do they ſit in their own light, who give not all diligence to abound in *Good Works? nill we, will we*, we muſt remove hence; here we cannot ſtay alwayes, ſometime or other we will be forced to pack to another World, and ſhould we not then before hand ſecure a *Habitation, and Endeavour* that it may be well with us there? if we were to be baniſhed *this Kingdom*, or ſaw any neceſſity of leaving it, we Would take care to Tranſport our goods whither we intended to take up our *reſidence or we would make money of them and carry bills thither*, that we may have wherewith *to ſuſtain and comfort our ſelves*: Now what madneſs is it, not to be as *provident for our Souls*, as for our Bodies? why do we not diſtribute

bute our Goods to the uſe of the Poor and needy, that we may have Treaſures in Heaven? And that when this *Earthly tabernacle is diſſolved we may be lodged in glorious and Eternal manſions?* 'Tis ſtrange to ſee *how fond Men* are upon Poſſeſſions here below, they will give all they are Worth, nay contract for more (though it *Make their Life burdenſome*) to get an Heritage upon Earth, notwithſtanding they are perſwaded that they cannot abide with it. Now a *Purchaſe in Heaven may be had eaſilier*, it needs not all, nor half, nor the Fourth part of our goods to this, a *Tenth* part *Devotely diſpoſed* will do the buſineſſe: And is it not Wiſdom then to lay out money rather upon this, which may be had ſo eaſily, which is beſt in it ſelf, & which is of *Eternal Advantage?* A *Charitable Perſon* of all others is the Wiſeſt and Happieſt, for he both enjoyeth the *good things of this preſent life*, and alſo has the better *things of the Life to Come* reſerved for him.

6ly. The profite of Charity is not confined to the Perſons of the Charitable Man, it deſcendeth to his children, it entails a Bleſſing upon his Poſterity, and it goeth well with them for his ſake. *His ſeed ſhall be mighty upon Earth, the generation of the upright ſhall be bleſſed, Wealth and Riches ſhall be in* his

his house: For such as he blessed of him shall inherite the Earth, and they that he cursed of him shall be cut off. All Parents that are no unnaturall with their Children well, and desire they may have wherewith to live honestly in the World after themselves are gone; now the best course for this is to be *Charitable*, for *Charity* secures to them the Favour of GOD, and the *Providence of the Almighty* which is the *Chiefest Treasure*; this makes GOD their *Tutor* and *Curator*, who is best able to manage their interest; and without him others can do but little. How many have left great Summes behind them, and much riches, whose Children have been Vagabounds running up and down *Seeking Bread?* The Blessing of the LORD is the best Inheritance, 'Tis the best Portion Parents can leave their Children, and Charitable Persons may bequeath it confidently. The *bountiful Man* needs not be troubled that he hath Little to leave among his Children, for GOD will Blesse *that little*, and make it sufficient; *A little that a righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked*; *Psal:* 37. 16. That is, it goeth farther, doth more good, and is more profitable for the *Owners* And though he hath no means at all to bestow, yet he has no Reason to vex him-

himſelf upon that account; For GOD will then ſurely be their *Proviſor*, GOD will repay to his Children what he lent to the Poor. *I have been young* ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *and now am Old, yet I have not ſeen the righteous forſaken, Nor his Seed begging Bread*; *Pſalm:* 37. 25. I ſhall not ſay no inſtance to the contrary can be ſhewed, but truely I believe very few; let Men look abroad the World, obſerve themſelves, and ask at others, and they ſhall find it generally true that the Children of the *Good and Merciful have mett with ſingular Providences.* do not therefore excuſe thy ſelf from Charitable Deeds becauſe thou haſt a numerous Family and many Children, this is but to mock GOD and deceive thy ſelf: Thou ſhould rather *take Pity on the Poor, that mercy and compaſſion may be ſhewed to thine*; that when Father and Mother forſake thy Children the LORD may take them up. What would People ſay or do if they were in the *Widow of Zarepha's* Circumſtance, *who had not a cake but an handful of Meal in a Barrel, and a little Oile in a cruſe*, and that too in the dayes of great Famine? I ſuppoſe many would think they had Reaſon to deny even a Prophet himſelf, but did ſhe loſs by giving a *Morſel* to *Eliah?* Did ſhe prejudge her ſelf or her *Son?* If

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ſhe had refuſed the Prophet, ſhe and her Son would have eaten all at one meale and then died: But becauſe ſhe fed the Prophet, therefore the *word of the LORD* was that *the barrel of Meal ſhall not waſt, neither ſhall the cruſe of Oyl fail, untill the day that the LORD ſendeth rain upon the Earth*; 1. *King:* 17. 14. Learn by this Example to obey the LORD, who hath commanded thee to *give bread to the Hungry, and Drink to the Thriſty*; Grudge not becauſe thy Subſtance is ſmall, truſt in GOD, believe and obey his Word, and he will cauſe thy ſmall Quantity of Meal and Oyle to laſt, and to be ſufficient for thee and thy Children.

In the *Laſt place* it may engage us to be *Charitable* to conſider the *Wretched ſtate* and circumſtances of Uncharitable and hard Hearted Perſons. Their *Betters* deſpiſe them their Neighbours and Equals value them not, and the Poor envy and curſe them; people talk of their Miſfortunes and Diſaſters with Complacency, and murmure at any good which befall them: They have not the Love and Goodwill of the Generation they live in, and *when they die their name die with them*, or it is unſavourie and remembred with diſguſt. But this is the leaſt part of their miſery, they are no leſſe odi-

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ous to God then to Man; he hates & abominates them, becauſe they violate *his Laws*, deſpiſe his *Authority*, abuſe his *Mercies*, and are unthankful for his *Goodneſs*; they counteract the *Methods of his Providence*, keep People from diſcerning the Beauty and Wiſdom thereof, yea occaſion many to Blaſpheme his *Name*, therefore *his Soul abhorreth them*: And as *Bleſſings are upon the head of the Righteous* and *Mercifull*, ſo *curſes are heap'd upon ſuch wicked and hard-hearted Perſons.* If GOD blaſt not their Fortune altogether, it is keept to their hurt; as they harden their Hearts againſt the Poor, ſo the LORD ſhutteth their own Bowels upon themſelves, ſo that they can as little allow themſelves as others the neceſſary *Supplies of Nature*, he hath, but uſeth it as little as they who have nothing, which certainly is a great plague and curſe; *Behold*, ſaith *Solomon*, *it is good and comely for one to Eat and to Drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the Sun, all the dayes of his Life which GOD giveth him, for it is his Portion. Every man alſo to whom GOD hath given Riches and Wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his Portion, and to rejoice in his Labour, this is the gift of GOD.* But ſaith he, *There is an evil which I have ſeen under the Sun, and it is common among Men,*

(and indeed among none ſo common as among Uncharitable Men.) *A man to whom GOD hath given Riches, Wealth, and Honour, ſo that he wanteth nothing for his Soul of all that he deſireth, yet GOD giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a ſtranger eateth it, this is vanity and it is an evil diſeaſe.* *Eccl.* 5. 18, 19. 6. 12. Farther it may be obſerved, that GOD often deprives ſuch perſons of the *comfort of Children*, or if they have them, for the moſt part they have little comfort in them: The Children of ſuch ordinarly are graceleſs and debauch'd, they are averſe from all *Honeſt Callings*, and uſe to laviſh away what their Parents ſordidely hoorded up; But as often they want Children: and he who hath Means and wanteth Children, hath but little ſatisfaction in his means, and far leſs in his Relations and Acquaintances; for he is filled with Jealouſies and Suſpicions againſt them, that they look greedily after his Eſtate, and wiſh him dead that they may graſp it, therefore he is ever altering and renewing his will; partly through jealouſie, partly through his peeviſhneſs he puts off the making a wiſe diſpoſition of his goods; he cannot think on it till his death, which ſurpriſing him, hence it is that what he ſo anxiouſly gathered, and keept, often falls into

into the hands of thoſe he little thought on, or cared for, which fooliſh end is all the ſubject of diſcourſe at his *Funeral*, and every Bodies ſport and laughter then and afterwards, *Finally* let us follow the *Uncharitable Man* unto the other World, and we ſhall ſee his caſe yet ſader; there he ſtands more deſpicably then ever the Poor here did at his own door, and cryes for help to as little purpoſe. *GOD hath no Mercy upon* him, *Angels and Saints ſtand aloof*, he hath no *Teſtificats* from the Poor, can produce no *Letters of Advice* from theſe *Factors* of theirs here below to recommend him, and ſo thoſe *Heavenly inhabitants declare they know him not*, they will not *receive him to their Everlaſting Habitations*, and thus he is forced to lodge with *Devils and Damned Spirits where there is weeping and wailing and gnaſhing of Teeth.*

Thus we have propoſed ſome *Motives* to *Charity*, more might have been laid before you, but theſe are ſufficient; he who is not excited by theſe would not be moved by other Conſiderations, and he muſt be ſtrangely hardened who is not convinc'd and perſwaded by them. If what hath been ſaid has any influence on the *Reader*, if he thereby find his Bowels moved and his heart in-

clined to *Charity*, I ſhall only ſay this farther to him, that he delay not the expreſſing his *Charity* till his *Death*, as too many do; the time and manner of thy Death is very uncertain, do good therefore whiles thou haſt Health; leave not this work to thy *Heirs* or *Executors*, for thou knowſt not how faithfull they will be; exerce *Acts* of *Charity* in thine own Time, give Alms with thine own Hand, and thereby thy *Sincerity* ſhall the better appear, and thou alſo ſhall have the greater Satisfaction thereof.

The end of the Second Part.

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